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MEMOIRS

OF

HEINRICH HEINE

Thomas W. Evans



Heinrich Heine.

THE MEMOIRS
OF
HEINRICH HEINE

*AND SOME NEWLY-DISCOVERED FRAGMENTS
OF HIS WRITINGS*

WITH

AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

BY

THOMAS W. EVANS, M.D.

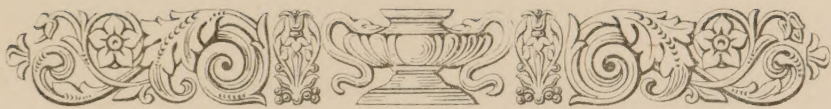
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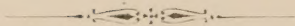
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1884

BZP (Heine)





P R E F A C E



Having come into possession of the copyright, for the English language, of the recently-discovered "Memoirs" of Heinrich Heine, the editor of this volume now publishes a translation of these autobiographical notes, together with an introductory essay on the life and works of the great German poet. The "Memoirs,"

and other hitherto unpublished fragments of Heine's writings contained in this volume, will certainly be read with interest and pleasure by the English and American public. The editor only regrets that the necessity of bringing out the English translation, as nearly as possible, simultaneously with the German and French editions, has precluded that careful revision of the work to which he had intended to submit it before going to press. The imperfections arising from the omission alluded to, do not, however, affect the substance of the work.

Heine has been frequently and unjustly censured with regard to his religious views, which were those of a liberal and cosmopolitan mind. In giving to the public this volume, the editor may express

the hope that he has done something to vindicate the character of a man whose genius is generally admired, and who, as a writer, occupies a place of the highest rank in modern literature.

THOMAS W. EVANS, M.D.

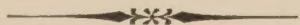
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May 1st, 1884.





HEINRICH HEINE'S LIFE AND WORKS



NO GERMAN poet since Goethe has exercised so powerful an influence on modern literature, or deserves so much attention on account of his great genius, as Heinrich Heine, of whose recently discovered memoirs this volume contains a faithful translation.

The news that Heine's memoirs, or at least a portion of them, were found, created a general excitement in all the literary circles and amongst all the educated classes of Germany, nay, we might say, of the whole of Europe. The fame of the man, who, as a lyric poet, stands pre-eminent in modern literature, and, as a humorist, ranks amongst the most brilliant writers of the world,

has become so universal, that there exists hardly any cultivated language into which some of his works at least have not been translated. There are versions of Heine's lyrics in French, Italian, Russian, Spanish, and even in the language of Japan; and the beautiful poems of the German author, although the delicacy of their flavor is almost too subtle to be conveyed by a translation, and can be fully appreciated only by those who read them in the original, inspire general admiration even in their foreign garb.

On the other hand, there has been perhaps no poet who has been more severely criticised for certain passages in his writings, or more blamed for his personal conduct, than Heine; and, unfortunately, his critics and accusers, by their exaggerations, have greatly injured the reputation of the poet, whose good qualities are so striking that they considerably overbalance his bad ones. It would be no more than fair to overlook his weaknesses and his faults, especially when we remember that the poet, by the most horrible physical sufferings, borne with marvelous heroism during nearly eight years, has expiated the sins of his youth—sins that were partially the

consequence of the acts of others, and of the false position in which he was placed from the moment of his birth.

Heine, it is true, was not faultless, but he was certainly no worse than many men who have been considered models of virtue. He wronged himself by being so unwise as to reveal his entire soul to the public, instead of hiding what most men hide and what, perhaps, ought to be hidden. But one thing is certain—he was far better than he made himself out to be. There are few persons who deserve this high praise. Those who read Heine's writings from beginning to end, who are broad enough not to be scandalized by his sallies, who are generous enough to pardon his faults, and intelligent enough to perceive the undercurrent of his thoughts, must come to the conclusion that he was not only a brilliant writer but also a man endowed with a most noble soul, inspired by the most lofty feelings and always wishing for the highest and the best; in short a man, who, though he often went astray in his search after truth, never relaxed in his efforts to find it, and remained faithful to himself even to the very brink of the grave.

Of all English authors, the one who most

closely resembles Heine, as regards his feelings and his purposes, is Lord Byron ; therefore, in this essay on the great German poet, we shall often draw comparisons between him and the English bard. Although the special poetical talent of the one differs widely from that of the other, nevertheless the great genius of the two men, the similar circumstances of their life and education, and the similar sentiments produced by the latter in the souls of both, justify such a parallel.

Heinrich Heine was born in a Prussian city, of Jewish parents. Unimportant as these circumstances of his birth may seem at the first glance, they nevertheless furnish an explanation of many of the misfortunes of Heine's life, just as the fact that Lord Byron was born in England with a club foot, gives us a key to the curious development of his character and the faults which he committed.

The Jewish parentage of Heine in a country where the Jews have always been more or less persecuted, and at a time when they were treated little better than persons afflicted with leprosy, branded him with a mark which was held by society to be almost as degrading as that inflicted by the hangman. And it was similarly prejudicial

to Lord Byron to have a bodily defect in a country where physical perfection is regarded as not the least important of a man's possessions ; where athletic exercises and sports form a large part of the education of the young noblemen ; and where his deformity threatened to prevent him from participating in the amusements of his young comrades, and from competing for distinction with them.

It may be urged that in the case of a renowned man like Lord Byron a bodily defect would be overlooked by all of his countrymen ; but we do not speak here of Lord Byron, the great poet ; we speak of Lord Byron, the boy who has as yet done nothing to distinguish himself, but who unfortunately bears the mark of a deformity, which exposes him to the ridicule of his youthful companions. Lord Byron always felt bitterly, especially in his younger days, that he had been neglected by nature, and those who have read his life, will remember the sad fact that there were many persons, his own mother among them, inconsiderate enough to let the boy feel a misfortune, which he resented but too keenly.

Thomas Moore, in his book entitled "The

Life and Letters of Lord Byron," speaks in regard to Byron's infirmity and the influence which it exercised upon his character, as follows: "...the embittering circumstance of his life—that which haunted him like a curse, amidst the buoyancy of youth and the anticipations of fame and pleasure, was, strange to say, the trifling deformity of his foot. By that one slight blemish (as in his moments of melancholy he persuaded himself) all the blessings that nature had showered upon him were counterbalanced. His reverend friend, Mr. Becher, finding him one day unusually dejected, endeavored to cheer and rouse him by representing in their brightest colors all the various advantages with which Providence had endowed him, and among the greatest, that of 'a mind which placed him above the rest of mankind.' 'Ah, my dear friend,' said Byron, mournfully, 'if *this*,' (laying his hand on his forehead) 'places me above the rest of mankind, *that*' (pointing to his foot) 'places me far, far below them.'

"It sometimes, indeed, seemed as if his sensitiveness on this point, led him to fancy that he was the only person in the world afflicted with such an infirmity. When that accomplished scholar

and traveler, Mr. D. Baillie, who was at the same school with him at Aberdeen, met him afterwards at Cambridge, the young peer had then grown so fat that, though accosted by him familiarly as his school-fellow, it was not till he mentioned his name that Mr. Baillie could recognize him. 'It is odd enough too that you shouldn't know me,' said Byron; 'I thought nature had set such a mark upon me that I could never be forgotten.'

"But while this defect was such a source of mortification to his spirit, it was also, and in an equal degree perhaps, a stimulus, and more especially in whatever depended upon personal prowess or attractiveness, he seemed to feel himself piqued by this stigma which nature, as he thought, had set upon him, to distinguish him above those whom she had endowed with her more 'fair proportion.' In pursuits of gallantry he was, I have no doubt, a good deal actuated by this incentive."

The intelligent youth at first grew reserved and misanthropic, and finally suspicious and oversensitive, violently resenting every insult, or those words and acts in which he devined a malicious

intent. The impressions made in youth are powerful and much more enduring than they are generally believed to be. Lord Byron's club-foot, and the ridicule which he actually suffered in consequence of it, and still more, that which he was in constant dread of suffering, are the cause of many of the characteristic sentiments which we find in his writings. His Jewish origin was the club-foot of Heinrich Heine. Through the insults to which it exposed him, he soon discovered that it was to be the curse of his life, and he tried at first to hide it from the world ; but, seeing that it was impossible for him to do so, he paraded this club-foot openly and cynically, pretending it was the hoof of Mephistopheles, whose character he logically assumed, in order to avenge himself upon those who had made him suffer.

Until the discovery of the "Memoirs," comparatively little was known concerning the boyhood of Heinrich Heine ; but, from the bitter and sarcastic remarks which occur in many places in his works, it can be plainly seen that he had much to endure from his schoolmates, on account of his Israelitish birth. Now that these

writings have been found, the reader can easily judge of the manner in which the youth was treated; he need only glance at the passages referring to Heine's grandfather on his father's side, to Heine's name of Harry, to the anecdote of the zebra and the ass of Balaam, and similar instances, where the bitterness of the author's feelings is but thinly hidden behind the veil of a smile; just as he is in the habit of disguising the greatest sorrows of his heart behind a mask of irony.

As Heine is a subjective writer in the fullest sense of the word, it is only necessary, in order to judge of the author himself, to note the sayings that he puts into the mouth of the figures which his fancy has created.

The words, for instance, which, in his "Reisebilder," he makes the little Jew Hirsch of Hamburg say, when he asks him what his opinion is of the Jewish religion, plainly indicate Heine's own thought in regard to it. "Doctor," says Hirsch, "the mischief take the Jewish religion! I do not wish it to my worst enemy. It brings nothing but abuse and disgrace. I tell you it ain't a religion, it is a misfortune."

Yet Heine, although he keenly felt the many

difficulties which his Jewish origin placed in the way of his success in the world, did not by any means think lightly of the creed of his fathers; on the contrary, he had at one time the intention to enter the arena as a champion for the social rehabilitation of the Jews, and the fragment which we possess of his "Rabbi of Bacharach," shows how well his genius qualified him to open the eyes of the world in regard to the injustice that so often has been done to that persecuted race.

The current of his life, however, soon drew him in another direction, and his love of poetry became, in time, stronger than all other inclinations; nevertheless, through all his writings we feel his correct appreciation of the noble and good in the creed of Moses.

Thus, in his "Confessions," in order to show how cruelly the Jews have been treated, and how much may be said in their favor, he speaks as follows: "Excluded from the right of owning land and from the acquisition of property through handicraft, the Jews had for their only resource commerce and money-dealing, both of which pursuits the church prohibited to the faith-

ful. Thus the Jews were legally condemned to become rich and despised, and to be slaughtered. These slaughters were, in those early days, it is true, committed under the cloak of religion, and it was declared to be a duty to kill those who had killed our Saviour. How absurd! The very same people who had given to the world a God, and whose whole life was one aspiration after the fear of God, was now decried as a nation of deicides! We have seen a bloody parody of this madness at the outbreak of the revolution in San Domingo, when a band of negroes devastated the plantations with fire and sword, under the leadership of a black fanatic, who carried a huge crucifix, and cried with bloodthirsty rage, 'The white men killed Christ; let us kill the white men.' Yes, the world is indebted to the Jews, to whom it owes its God; also for His Divine Word, the Bible. Just as they saved it at the sacking of Jerusalem, so they saved it at the time of the overthrow of the Roman Empire; and through all the crazy tumult of the migration of the nations they preserved the cherished book, until Protestantism sought it out, and translated it into the language of every country, and spread it over the whole world."

In his book on "Shakespeare's Matrons and Maids," Heine says : "The Jews are a chaste, abstemious, one might almost say, an ascetic people, and in purity of morals they most nearly approach the Teutonic race." Another eulogy of the Jews is found in his book on Ludwig Boerne. "The Jews," he says, "might well console themselves for the loss of Jerusalem, and the Temple, and the Ark of the Covenant, the sacred jewels of the High Priest and the golden vases of Solomon. Such a loss is trifling when compared with that of the Bible, that invaluable treasure which they saved. It was Mohammed, if I mistake not, who called the Jews 'the people of the Book,' a name which still clings to them in Eastern countries and is of proud significance. A book is their fatherland, their possession, their ruler, their happiness, and their misfortune. Within the narrow enclosure of this book they live, and exercise their inalienable right of citizenship; they cannot be driven from this sacred domain, nor made to suffer contumely within it; here they are admirable and strong. Absorbed in the perusal of this book, they give little heed to the changes that take place around them in

the real world. Nations rise and fall, states flourish and become extinct, the storms of revolution sweep across the earth, but they, the Jews, prostrate over their book, take no notice of the wild chase of time pursuing its mad career above their heads."

These extracts from Heine's prose writings plainly show that he was not an apostate in the real meaning of the word. It was only because, as a Jew, every career, except that of a tradesman, would have been closed to him, that he became a Christian, but it was against his own will that he saw himself forced to take this step.

The prejudices existing in Germany against the Jews in Heine's time were very great. In Frankfort-on-the-Main, for instance, at the commencement of the present century, the Jews were treated like "Pariahs" — like the outcasts of humanity. They were cooped up in their Ghetto and excluded almost entirely from social contact with the Christian population. In no place where there was a green spot or pleasure-ground was a Jew permitted to appear; neither upon the "Schneidewall," nor in the "Ross," nor upon the "Roemerberg," nor in the "Allee," were they

allowed to promenade. Every Sunday afternoon, at four o'clock, the quarter where the Jews lived was closed ; and the guard placed at the entrance permitted only those to pass who had a letter for the post or a prescription for the apothecary. Only twenty-four Jews were permitted to marry in a year, that the Jewish population should not increase too quickly ; and this state of things lasted until Napoleon abolished these harsh mediæval ordinances.

We have mentioned, however, only a small part of the indignities which the Jews had to suffer. Those who are not acquainted with the persecutions of the Hebrews, which were most ferocious during the middle ages, but which have not ceased up to the present moment, will never be able to guess how cruelly these people have been treated, and what a fearful curse rests upon them.

Heine very correctly remarks : "The history of the modern Jews is tragical ; and yet, if one were to write about this tragedy, he would be laughed at. This is the most tragic of all."

He, at a very early age, became acquainted with the tragic destiny of Israel, and scarcely

during any period of his life was he permitted to forget it. When still a school-boy, his being the child of Jewish parents caused him to be the butt of ridicule among his companions, and when he grew up he became aware that this same cause prevented him from choosing a congenial career.

In his memoirs, we read that his mother had, at first, the intention to make a soldier of him. This idea had been produced in her mind at a time when Napoleon's wise order had placed the Jews on an equal footing with the Christians, and permitted them to enter the army, a thing until then unheard of. After the fall of the Great Emperor, the ambitious plan of Madam Heine had, however, to be given up, for in Prussia, although many Jews had bravely fought in the German war of liberation, all those who had obtained the position of officer in the army had either to retire into private life after the conclusion of peace, or they were reduced to the ranks; a Jew no longer was permitted to hold a command in the army. This condition of things has only recently been altered in Prussia, and

at Heine's time there was no opportunity for a Jewish boy to obtain military honors.

The fall of Napoleon was for the future of young Heine of the greatest importance, for now his relatives decided to dedicate him to a business career.

But the boy had quite different desires. His poetical mind had been cradled in dreams of glory and ambition, and his superior intelligence revolted at the idea of entering upon a life of common-place routine. As his memoirs show, his natural inclination toward a literary calling had been strengthened by the instruction which he received from an uncle, who was himself somewhat of a literary man, and also by the impression which the romantic life of one of his grand-uncles produced upon the mind of the boy, who eagerly absorbed the tales which he heard about this interesting relative.

Young Heine wished to become an author; and all the efforts of his family to persuade him not to choose a career which promised only an uncertain future, and seemed to exclude all hopes of material benefits, were in vain.

After some unsuccessful trials, in giving to the

youth a business education, first, by sending him to Frankfort, and afterwards to Hamburg, where he seems to have stayed about two years, his relatives permitted him to enter the University, on condition, however, that he should study law, the only profession in which, they thought, young Heine might achieve success. As a legal position was likewise unattainable by a Jew, it was furthermore decided that, after finishing his studies, he should be baptized.

Heinrich Heine, although reluctantly, accepted both conditions, as this alone gave him a chance to pursue his literary studies, and in the year 1819 he entered the university of Bonn.

The young man, who meanwhile had reached his twentieth year, brought to his new place of sojourn a heart full of enthusiasm, full of poetry, and in it the germs of a first love, which was to be to him, as it had been to Lord Byron, the second cause of grief and bitterness, which, added to the misfortune of his birth, had a most powerful influence upon his later career.

While still in Hamburg, in the uncongenial situation of a clerk, Heinrich Heine had made the acquaintance of his cousin, the daughter of

the rich banker, Salomon Heine. The young man, who saw himself everywhere surrounded by objects which he disliked, and who, with his heart full of sympathy for all that is good and beautiful, felt isolated in a commonplace commercial city amongst its matter-of-fact inhabitants, seems joyfully to have opened his heart to the young girl, who evidently appreciated the sentiments of her relative, and who, if she did not encourage his love, at least did not treat it with scorn.

Amalia Heine, this was the name of the banker's daughter, was only a few months younger than her cousin, and from all that is known about her, seems to have been a clever girl of very attractive appearance.

"It would be a foolish and useless undertaking," says Adolf Strodtmann in his biography of Heine, "from Heine's poetical allusions, to try to find out the details of his first love. Whether the girl made him hope for her hand; whether she broke the silent promise of their hearts carelessly or at the instigation of her relatives; whether the easily excitable imagination of the young dreamer took for encouragement what was perhaps only a kind of harmless coquetry or inno-

cent delight in the modest homage paid to her, is indifferent to us, and we will leave it to others to make investigations of so indiscreet a nature, the result of which would neither heighten nor lower the value of Heine's poems referring to this love. Nobody has spoken more disapprovingly with regard to attempts at reconstructing the poetical character of a writer, by collecting fragments of his history, than Heine himself." One thing is certain, Amalia Heine became the "Muse" of Heine's poetry. As might have been foreseen, the daughter of the rich banker did not wait for her cousin, who had scarcely any prospect of a brilliant future, but married a few years after Heine had left Hamburg; and the young man, whose heart had been entirely absorbed by this affection, which was much more serious than the girl probably had expected, fell into a state of melancholy and despondency, that proved very disastrous to him later in life, although it endowed German literature with some of the most beautiful of poems.

The young poet thought that he was betrayed by all the world, and now, since the only being in whom he had confided, had, in his opinion

also betrayed him, he gave up all hope of ever finding anyone who could understand his heart. In order to quiet his painful reflections, he abandoned himself to a life of dissipation unworthy of his character, which might have been his ruin had not from time to time the sweet remembrance of his first love brought him back for a short period to the right way, thus proving to him the voice of a guardian angel, which, lovely and divine, is so often heard in the midst of the most painful discords of his poetry.

Just as in the poems of Lord Byron, so in the poems of Heine, we meet again and again with the indications of a noble soul, full of sympathy and love, which are very touching and sad, because the longings of their hearts were never realized; and the poetical productions of the English as well as of the German poet are the continually repeated cry for love, which neither of them found, because both, although desiring the good, swerved from the right path from the very first moment of their disappointment.

It is this similarity of sentiment that has induced so many critics to maintain that the poems

of Heine and Byron are essentially alike; but only a very superficial acquaintance with the writings of the two authors can lead to such an impression. By entering deeper into the spirit of their writings, one soon recognizes that, notwithstanding the similarity of the authors' sentiments, the character of their poems differs widely. Although the leading motive, viz., disappointment in love, and the feeling of being neglected by fate, is common to many of the poems of both authors, it soon becomes apparent that there is a difference with respect to their poetical conception.

Thus, as regards the difference between the poems of Heine and Byron as works of art, it is not to be denied that the German poet excels the English poet by far in simplicity of language, in preciseness of expression, and, in fact, in all which gives to a poem a lyrical character. Byron's poems, even the smaller ones, are contemplations, often approaching to actual description, rather than the simple outcry of a soul; they are not those melodious utterances in rhythm which constitute a lyric. Amongst the Germans Goethe alone, in a few of his shorter poems, has reached the lyrical perfection which we find in Heine's

songs; and amongst other nations, only the Greeks have, in their literature, productions of equal poetical merit and of equal excellence in this particular.

On the other hand, the characteristic features of Byron's poetry, viz., the beauty of description and the philosophical contemplation of nature are almost entirely wanting in the works of Heine. Such passages as we find for instance in the introduction of the "Giaour," or in the "Bride of Abydos," or in the description of the thunder-storm on the lake of Geneva in "Childe Harold," are found nowhere in Heine, and have never been equaled in their special excellence by any other writer.

But sometimes it is not only the difference of the poetical character but also of the personal character which strikes the attentive reader of the works of the two poets mentioned, and this proves that, although their sentiments often coincide, they also occasionally differ. Thus, for instance, although through all of Byron's poems we discover the bitterness of the author against her who, as he supposes, deceived him, and against the world in general, from which he feels

separated because he feels himself above it, there is no personal diffidence perceptible, and although his writings are filled with irony in regard to others, there is little or no self-irony to be found in them.

Heine, on the contrary, although he also is embittered against the world, and although he also recognizes his personal superiority and gives to it occasionally a very daring expression, often distrusts his own feelings. Again and again we find in his poems the question: "Is not perhaps my own enthusiasm a weakness, am I not a Don Quixote who wastes his strength by fighting for an imaginary value?" The Jew, as a boy, was made to feel that the world considered him an outcast, and all his songs are pervaded by the sensitiveness of the Pariah who is afraid of ridicule, although he in his heart is conscious of his divine superiority over all the Brahmins, who on account of their birth have the advantage of being regarded by the world as his superiors.

There is another element in the works of the German poet which is entirely wanting in those of the English bard: it is the weird, the horrible; it is the delight in the ghastly

mysteries of the tomb ; it is the gloomy thought to which the Pariah became accustomed when, from a world in which he met only with persecutions, he retired to the churchyards, where he spent his hours in sad reflections, only brightened by the hope of a future beyond this life, when his tired soul would find rest.

There is only one of the poems of Lord Byron in which the weird prevails ; it is entitled "The Devil's Drive," and is found amongst his miscellaneous pieces. In most of Heine's poems the love of the horrible is plainly perceptible, awakened perhaps at first during those days of his boyhood, which he spent in the company of the daughter of the executioner, whom the reader will find mentioned in the Memoirs, and is manifested in a like manner only perhaps in some of the poems of Edgar A. Poe.

Young Heine's sorrows are faithfully set forth in the following stanzas:—

A young man loves a maiden
Who another youth prefers ;
The other he loved another,
And has joined his fate to hers.

The maiden marries from anger—
Accepting the very next
Who comes in the way with an offer—
And the youth is sorely vexed.

It is an old, old story,
And yet 'tis ever new;
And he to whom it answers,
It breaks his heart in two.*

The repetition of this "old, old story" filled Heine's heart with the poison of bitterness, and he only tells the full truth when he exclaims:—

My songs are full of poison—
How could it different be,
Since thou hast been pouring poison
O'er the bloom of life for me?

* This little poem, like all the other poems of Heine which are quoted in this volume (with the exception of those of which the name of the translator is given) is to be found among the excellent translations of Charles G. Leland, an American author. Like his countryman, Bayard Taylor, he deserves the praise of having most perfectly translated German poetry. Leland's version of Heine's "Book of Songs," and that by Bayard Taylor of Goethe's "Faust," are the best English translations of German poetry in existence, and have not even been approached hitherto.

My songs are full of poison—
And poisoned they well may be:
I bear in my heart many serpents,
And with them, beloved, thee."

One of these poisoned poems, in which Heine's genius, however, unfolds itself in its full grandeur, is found in that part of the "Book of Songs" which bears the title "Lyrical Intermezzo."

In the poem which begins with the words: "Nacht lag auf meinen Wegen," the poet describes how he dreamed that he had committed suicide—the temptation may have often approached him—and that he was lying in the grave. It reads as follows in Leland's translation:—

Night lay upon my eyelids,
Lead lay upon my mouth;
With brain and heart all frozen,
I lay in the grave of youth.

I cannot tell how long it was
I slumbered in the cave,
Till I awoke and listened
To a knocking in my grave.

"Will you not rise, my Henry?
The Judgment Day comes on,
And all the dead are risen,
Their endless joy begun."

“Dear love, there is no rising
For one forever blind;
The sight I lost through weeping
I ne’er again shall find.”

“But from your eyes, my Henry,
I’ll kiss the night away;
And you shall see the angels,
And Heaven’s glorious day.”

“I cannot rise, my darling—
It bleeds as from a sword
Where in my heart you stabbed me
With one sharp-pointed word.”

“But very gently, Henry,
I’ll press your heart again;
And that will stanch the bleeding,
And that will heal the pain.”

“I cannot rise, my darling,
My head is bleeding, see,
Where long ago I fired the shot
When you were stol’n from me.”

“But with my tresses, Henry,
Your head may well be bound:
And that will stop the bleeding
And cure the cruel wound.”

She prayed so softly, sweetly,
I could not say her no ;
So, with the one I loved so well,
I sought to rise and go.

Then all my wounds burst open,
And like a torrent broke
From head and heart the blood-stream ;
And then in haste I woke.

Similarly dismal complaints and thoughts we find in almost all of Heine's poems, but it is only very seldom that they extend over so great a number of stanzas as in the one above. For the most part Heine's poems consist either of four lines, eight lines, or twelve lines ; and what is the most marvelous thing about them is that they contain a wealth of thought, which is rarely found even in the longest poetical productions of other writers.

The condition of his mind at a time when he became aware that his love was not requited, he describes in the following four lines :—

The midnight air was cold and rude ;
I wandered wailing through the wood ;
But though the trees from their sleep I waken,
Above me in pity their heads are shaken.

His farewell to the loved one he indicates in the following two stanzas :—

Often when two are parting,
Each grasps a hand as friend ;
And then begins a weeping
And sighing without end.

We did not sigh when parting ;
No tears between us fell—
The weeping and the sighing
Came after our farewell.

And the apparent resignation which followed upon the period of his first sorrows, he expressed in the four lines :—

I at first was near despairing ;
Never hoped to endure as now ;
And at length the whole I'm bearing ;
Only, do not ask me how.

But, in fact, he never became resigned. His heart, full of love, yearned for a soul that might understand it, and fluttered from flower to flower, hoping to find a resting-place ; but always, after having spent the night in dreams, it was awakened by rude storms to a reality all the more cruel because it was accompanied by bitter repentance. During the period of these restless wanderings, this hunting for love, originated many of those

poems by which a great part of the German as well as foreign public have been scandalized, but which nevertheless abound in many highly poetical beauties, that have been mostly overlooked, while the impure passages have been quickly understood. Heine himself expresses this when he says :—

Seldom did we know each other,
Seldom were we understood;
But our souls soon came together,
When we met in filth and mud.

Disappointment followed upon disappointment in the poet's life, and he became more and more estranged from the world, losing confidence in everybody.

There was only one human being who did understand him, and who really loved him. This was his mother, and all through his life, the poet gratefully recognized it, and preserved in his heart the most sacred feelings for her on whose bosom alone he found rest, and in whose heart alone he found sympathy.

How beautifully has the poet expressed his appreciation of his mother's love in the following sonnet!

In wild delusion from thy side once turning,
I wished to roam at will the wide world over ;
I wished to see if love would greet the rover,
And quench with love the love within me burning.
Through every street I sought, false Hope beguiling—
At every gate I stretched my hands in sorrow ;
Not the least love-gift could I beg or borrow,—
They only gave me *hate*, cold hate, while smiling.
So ever on I went for love, and ever,
And still for love, yet Love approached me never ;
And so turned home again all sick in sorrow.
Then thou didst come to me with eyes all beaming ;
And, oh, what was it in those dear eyes gleaming
But the sweet longed-for love I could not borrow?

Many other poems are pervaded by this spirit of filial love ; but Heine gave the most touching proof of his noble character when, for eight years forced to remain in bed in the most fearful torture and half blind he tried by all possible devices to keep the knowledge of his horrible suffering from his mother, carefully concealing from her everything that could possibly wound her heart.

Alfred Meissner relates, in his remembrances of Heinrich Heine, the following incident.

“Visiting Heine one evening, I interrupted him when he was just dictating a letter to his

secretary, and upon my asking to whom he was writing, he replied, 'To my mother!'

"Is she still alive," I asked, "the old lady who lives by the Dammthor?"

"Oh, yes," said he; "it is true she is old, sick, and weak, but she has still the warm heart of a mother."

"And you write often to her?"

"Regularly, every month."

"How unhappy she must be on account of your condition!"

"On account of my condition?" answered Heine. "Oh, as regards that, there exists between us a peculiar arrangement. My mother believes me to be as well and as healthy as I was when I last saw her. She is old and reads no newspapers; the few friends who visit her are in a similar condition. I write often to her, as well as I can, in a merry humor; speak to her of my wife, and tell her how well I am faring. As she is struck by the fact that only the signature is by me and all the rest by the hand of a secretary, she is always told that I suffer slightly from the eyes, a trouble which, however, will soon be over, but which prevents me from writing everything myself. And thus she is

happy. That a son can be as sick and miserable as I am, no mother would believe."

After this Heine became silent, and my soul was deeply moved when I saw him seal and send off to the post his letter, which was full of consoling news and assumed serenity.

This son, who upon his bed of torture, where he was lying for long years, deceives by a pious fraud his mother with regard to his sufferings; and this mother, who perhaps, in the seclusion of old age, may die without having ever heard of the sad condition of her son, which, except to her, is known to the whole world—do they not represent in their relations with each other a poem?

The great love for his mother in itself should prove to Heine's critics, and to those who have so often heard him slandered, that his heart was noble and true, and that he was anything but a cold egotist, who only cared for pleasure and amusement. He yearned for love, and wandered through life hoping that he might find a soul to understand him, and in this very search after a sympathetic heart he often went astray, but

never without regretting it, and never without returning to the right path as soon as he had perceived his mistake.

In the gloomy labyrinth of his life it was a great consolation to him to know that his mother never misinterpreted his real feelings; her love was the star of hope shining through the darkness that surrounded him.

A similar effect was produced upon Byron by his sister Augusta's love, which remained unchanged although the world calumniated him, and which is so beautifully described in his well-known "Stanzas to Augusta," which we will quote here, as the sentiment they contain forms a parallel to the above-quoted sonnet which Heine addressed to his mother.

STANZAS TO AUGUSTA.

Though the day of my destiny's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
It shrank not to share it with me.
And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in *thee*.

Then when nature around me is smiling,
The last smile which answers to mine,
I do not believe it beguiling,
Because it reminds me of thine;
And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their billows excite an emotion,
It is that they bear me from *thee*.

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd
To pain—it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me;
They may crush, but they shall not condemn;
They may torture, but shall not subdue me;
'Tis of *thee* that I think—not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake.
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake;
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me;
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,
Nor mute, that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many with one;
If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
'Twas folly not sooner to shun;

And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could forsee,
I have found that, whatever it lost me.
It could not deprive me of *thee*.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd;
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd
Deserved to be dearest of all.
In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

The first lyrical productions of Heinrich Heine, *i.e.*, those poems which were written before his sixteenth year, are said to have been very clever, but without any special indication of talent. Only one poem of that period has been printed in the complete edition of his works, and this is perhaps fortunate; even Lord Byron's youthful poems, published under the title of "Hours of Idleness," scarcely adorn the volume containing his collected poetry.

Very remarkable, however, are the verses of Heine which were composed during his sixteenth and seventeenth years, some of which he wrote

under the *nom de plume** “Sy Freudhold Riesenharf.” In these productions—and we draw the attention of the reader especially to one beginning with the words: “Ein Traum gar seltsam schauerlich” (Leland’s translation of Book of Songs, p. 2.)—the powerful genius of the great poet may already be discerned, and we are startled by the striking originality and beauty of their language. The readers of the memoirs of Heine will easily discover the source from which the poet took the dark background and the ghastly element of these poems, when he comes to the passages describing the visits the young man paid to the daughter of the old “woman from Goch,” to which we have already alluded, and which now, for the first time, are made known in detail to the literary world.

Among these early poems, which mostly treat of love, there is one of quite a different character, which, although Heine wrote it in his sixteenth year must be ranked among his best literary productions, and will not be forgotten as long as there exists a German literature.

* A rather clumsy anagram formed of the letters contained in the words “Harry Heine, Düsseldorf.”

This ballad is entitled, "The Two Grenadiers," and it will not fail, even in the translation, to make its impression upon the reader:—

To the land of France went two grenadiers
From a Russian prison returning ;
But they hung down their heads on the German
frontiers,
The news from their fatherland learning.

For there they both heard the sorrowful tale
That France was by fortune forsaken ;
That her mighty army was scattered like hail,
And the Emperor, the Emperor taken.

Then there wept together the grenadiers,
The sorrowful story learning ;
And one said, " Oh, woe ! " as the news he hears,
" How I feel my old wound burning ! "

The other said, " The song is sung,
And I wish that we both were dying !
But at home I've a wife and child—they're young—
On me, and me only, relying. "

" Oh, what is my wife or child to me !
Deeper wants all my spirit have shaken ;
Let them beg, let them beg should they hungry be !
My Emperor, my Emperor taken !

“But I beg you, brother, if by chance
You soon shall see me dying,
Then take my corpse with you back to France—
Let it ever in France be lying.

“The cross of honor with crimson band
Shall rest on my heart as it bound me ;
Give me my musket in my hand,
And buckle my sword around me.

“And there I will lie and listen still,
In my sentry-coffin staying,
Till I feel the thundering cannon’s thrill,
And horses trampling and neighing.

“Then my Emperor shall ride well over my grave,
Mid sabres bright slashing and smiting ;
And I’ll rise all weaponed up out of my grave,
For the Emperor, the Emperor fighting.”

In this ballad we observe, for the first time, Heine’s great enthusiasm for Napoleon I, which is to be found everywhere in his works, and which inspired him during the whole of his life.

On the 13th of December, 1799, *i.e.*, the very day on which Heinrich Heine was born, Napoleon Bonaparte was chosen First Consul of France, and soon the world became aware that Sieyès

had judged his colleague of the Consulate correctly, when he said : "Now we have a master, he knows everything ; he understands everything, and he has the will to do everything." From step to step the mighty Bonaparte rose until he became the conqueror of the world, and until the whole of Europe, either from admiration or fear, lay prostrate at his feet.

Almost the entire boyhood of Heinrich Heine was spent under the influence of French institutions. Düsseldorf, the native city of the poet, formerly the capital of the Duchy of Jülich-Berg, had been occupied by French troops as early as 1795, and the French garrison remained there until after the peace of Lunéville in May 1801. Then followed a short period during which the Elector Palatine and his successors reigned over the Duchy ; the sovereignty finally passed into the hands of the Duke William of Bavaria, and on the 25th of December, 1805, *i.e.*, only two years later, a treaty was signed at Paris, according to which the Elector Maximilian received the title of King of Bavaria, while his cousin, Duke William, had to cede his rights of sovereignty over the Duchy of Berg to France.

The reconstruction of countries, the promotions of sovereigns or the forfeitures of dynastic rights, were common events in those days, and Heine, with his usual wit, speaks of these things in his book "Le Grand," as follows:—

"In those days the French made hodge-podge of all land-marks and boundaries. Every day countries were recolored on the world's map; those which were blue suddenly became green, many indeed were even dyed blood-red; the old established lines were so confused and confounded that the d*** himself would never have recognized them. The products of the country were also changed; chicory and beets now grew where were once to be seen only hares, and hunters running after them; the very character of the different races changed: the Germans became pliant; the French paid compliments no longer; the English ceased making ducks and drakes of their money; and the Venetians were no longer sufficiently subtle; there were promotions among princes; old kings obtained new uniforms; new kingdoms were cooked up and sold like hot cakes; many potentates, on the other hand, were driven from house and home, and had to find some new way of earning their bread"

On the 20th of March, 1806, Duke William of Bavaria took leave of his former subjects in the Duchy of Berg, and Joachim Murat entered the city of Düsseldorf as Regent, in the name of his imperial brother-in-law, over the new Grand Duchy, which had been created for him.

He was a well-meaning, honest man of a kindly disposition, although somewhat strict in military matters; and above all he hated flattery. When the Mayor of Düsseldorf received him with rather a panegyric oration, he replied: "It is impossible that people can already love me in a country where I have not done anything yet; but they will love me—of that I am certain." And, in fact, Joachim Murat did all he could to win the sympathies of the population that had been confided to his care. While he was residing in Düsseldorf he had large quantities of grain imported into the Grand Duchy from the countries on the left bank of the Rhine; and when his position in the army prevented him from residing any longer among his subjects, and obliged him to serve his renowned brother-in-law in other parts of Europe, he did not forget the people of his German State, and although

he had to leave its administration to ministers, he continued to take a personal interest in their welfare. Thus, for instance, while in Paris, he gave orders that a commercial deputation from the Grand Duchy should be sent to him, that he might learn in what manner the mercantile interests of the country could be still improved. Even when he was absent in Poland on military duty, his mind was occupied with the country near the Rhine ; and from Warsaw he issued a very explicit edict, by which the pensions of government officials and of their widows and children should be regulated in a satisfactory manner.

Although he had appointed as his chief minister M. Agar, a Frenchman, whose talents he greatly appreciated, he was not at all inclined to appoint Frenchmen to official positions in his German province ; and in 1807, when he did appoint some French officers to prominent posts, he expressly admonished them not to forget that they were no longer in the French but in the German service, and the subjects of a Prince who himself was a member of the Rhein-Bund ; and even to the Emperor he courageously defended his practice

in this matter, although he sometimes met with resistance.

Under his Government commerce and industry, through increased intercourse with France, and also on account of the excellent administration of the laws, were greatly improved in the Grand Duchy; and the only complaint of the inhabitants was, that the military conscription, made necessary by the continual wars of the Emperor, required of them too many sacrifices. But even this cause of dissatisfaction Joachim Murat tried to remove, by granting exemption from service wherever it could be done; thus he entirely exempted the inhabitants of the district of Elberfeld from military duty, because in the manufactories of that district many young men were needed if its industry was not to be ruined.

The inhabitants of the Grand Duchy were consequently very much cast down, when they heard in 1808, that Joachim Murat was made King of Naples, and that he had again ceded his sovereignty over Berg to the Emperor.

Napoleon I, on the third of March of the following year, transferred the Grand Duchy to the son of his brother Louis, King of Holland—Napoleon

Louis, who at that time was only five years old, and whose brother has since become known in history as the Emperor Napoleon III. To this fact Heine refers in his "Confessions," when he calls Napoleon III his "legitimate sovereign;" because Napoleon Louis had never abdicated, and consequently "the Duchy, although occupied later by the Prussians, belonged, after his death, *de jure* to the younger son of the King of Holland, the Prince Louis Napoleon."

The Emperor Napoleon I, however, expressly reserved to himself the government of the country until his nephew should become of age; and on the 14th of November, 1808, it was, after the French fashion, divided into departments, cantons, etc. Although Napoleon's minister of the province, a French senator by the name of Roederer, treated the inhabitants comparatively harshly, they, notwithstanding, received a good many blessings to which they had not before been accustomed and amongst them, above all, equality as citizens. On the 12th of December, 1808, the Emperor by a decree entirely abolished bondage and all the rights based upon it, and on March 1st, 1809, by another decree, an

end was put to socage. Another amelioration dates from March 31st of the same year, for on that date the Prussian law, which prohibited noblemen from marrying peasants' daughters or the daughters of the *bourgeoisie*, was declared void. Three years later, on the 11th of February, 1812, the administration of justice was entirely reformed upon the model of the Napoleonic code, and from this date every privilege before the law was abolished. All inhabitants of the Grand Duchy were thereafter, in similar cases, tried without any distinction of person, before the same court. The definitive introduction of the Code Napoleon was one of the greatest blessings to the country, and although the former Grand Duchy of Cleve-Berg now belongs to Prussia, it has been found necessary to leave to its inhabitants the laws which they received from Napoleon.

It may be easily imagined that the new French rule was quite popular in the Grand Duchy, and it will be readily understood that Heine's family also had the greatest sympathies for the Emperor and his administration, especially if we remember the benefits which, as before mentioned, Napoleon I had granted to the Jews.

Heine's father, of whom the poet speaks so often in his memoirs, was a special admirer of Napoleon. "Would that God might have preserved him to us!" he exclaimed once in the days of the Restoration, when the Hamburg relatives of his family were defaming the Emperor and his generals. The Lyceum of Düsseldorf, where Heine was educated, was also, as is plainly to be seen from Heine's writings, entirely under French influence, for even the teacher of German history was a Frenchman.

All this explains Heine's early affection for the French Emperor, and especially did the boy become enthusiastic about his hero, after he had himself seen the man, whose deeds had been narrated to him by one of the *tambours* of the Old Guard, who, as he amusingly describes it in the book "Le Grand," used to instruct him by means of his drum in the events of contemporary history. "It was," Heine writes, "in the avenue of the court-garden at Düsseldorf. As I pressed through the gaping crowd, thinking of the deeds and battles which M. Le Grand had drummed to me, my heart beat the 'long roll,' and while I thought of the police regulation, that no one should,

under penalty of a fine of five thalers, ride through the avenue, the Emperor with his *cortège* came directly down the avenue. The trembling trees bowed toward him as he advanced, the sun's rays, timidly yet curiously, quivered through the green leaves, and in the blue sky above there seemed to glitter a golden star. The Emperor wore his unpretending green uniform and the world-renowned little hat. He rode a white palfrey that stepped with conscious pride. The Emperor sat carelessly, almost lazily, holding in one hand the rein, and with the other good-naturedly patting the neck of the horse; it was a tawny, marble hand, a mighty hand, one of the pair which bound fast the many-headed monster of anarchy, and reduced to order the discord of nations. Even the face had that hue which we find in the marble busts of the Greeks and Romans. The features were as nobly proportioned as in the antiques, and on his countenance was plainly written: 'Thou shalt have no Gods before me!' A smile which warmed and won every heart, flitted over the lips; and yet all knew that those lips needed but to whistle, *et la Prusse n'existait plus*; those lips needed but to move, and the

entire clergy would have ceased their ringing and singing; those lips needed but to move, and the entire holy Roman realm would have danced. And yet those lips smiled, and the eyes smiled also. His eye was as clear as heaven; it could read the hearts of men; it saw the things of this world at a glance as it were, while we ordinary mortals see them only one by one, and dimly even then. The brow was not so clear; the visions of future battles were gathering there, and at times a quiver would sweep across it—indicative of the creative thoughts, the great seven-mile-boot thoughts, wherewith the spirit of the Emperor strode invisibly over the world, and I believe that every one of those thoughts would have given to a German author full material to write upon all the days of his life.

“The Emperor rode quietly through the avenue; no policeman dared prevent him. Behind him, proudly, upon snorting horses, resplendent with gold and jewels, rode his suite; the drums were beating, the trumpets were sounding. . . . and the people cried with loud acclamations: ‘Long live the Emperor!’”

But Heine was not by any means an uncon-

ditional admirer of Napoleon; he was only enthusiastic with regard to his great genius, without approving of all his actions and plans. Thus in his "Reisebilder," in that part of the book where he describes his journey from Munich to Genoa (chapter xxix), he writes as follows: "I pray, dear reader, do not mistake me for an unconditional Bonapartist; my adoration is not for the deeds, but for the genius of the man, may this man be called Alexander, Cæsar, or Napoleon. I loved him boundlessly up to the eighteenth *Brumaire*, when he betrayed freedom. . . . Dear reader, let us understand each other once for all. I never praise the deed, but the soul of a man, of which the deed is only a garment; history in fact is nothing more than the old wardrobe of the soul of humanity. But a loving heart feels sometimes attached to an old garment, and I love the cloak of Marengo."

The words, "up to the eighteenth *Brumaire*" might give to the reader the idea that Heine was a Republican at heart. And so he was; only in a very ideal manner, however, for although he always defended Republican insti-

tutions in theory, he was never satisfied with their practical operation ; and although in his writings he often appears to be a champion for the liberty of the people, he was in practice essentially an aristocrat, and certainly appreciated what Horace expresses in the words, "*Odi profanum vulgus et arceo.*"

That Heine disliked actual contact with the so-called "Republicans," the reader may infer from the circumstances which brought about a rupture between the poet and the well-known German politician Boerne, with whom Heine, during the first period of his sojourn in Paris—where in 1831 he went as an exile—had been intimately associated.

For a long time they were accustomed to dine together in a restaurant, which was the resort of German artisans who had been obliged to leave their native country for political reasons. In this restaurant addresses were manufactured almost every day, in which some ultra-Radicals declared their wish to dethrone one or the other of the German monarchs, and the guests present were requested to put their signatures to them. Heine, although liberal in the best sense of the word,

and a courageous enemy of tyrants, was disgusted with this ridiculous system of political agitation; and he was very much annoyed that persons, who were unsympathetic to him on account of their coarseness, and who were mere agitators and no patriots, should ask him for his signature to documents in which he had not the slightest interest. For the sake of Boerne, who signed, as it seems, every revolutionary document that was presented to him, Heine yielded for some time to the wishes of his democratic countrymen; but at last he lost patience, and one day, when they asked him to sign a list of resolutions, violently attacking the politics of the Pope in regard to the Romagna, he cynically asked of what consequence the Pope was to him, turned his back on his enraged compatriots, and disappeared. By and by he held himself aloof from all political agitators, and the latter began to declare the poet an apostate and a traitor to liberty.

The short-sighted crowd were not able to appreciate the real feelings of the man, who, although he disliked Republican rudeness, did more to propagate liberal sentiments, and to secure

the privileges of Constitutional freedom for his country, than all the professional politicians and agitators put together. True, the scenes of fearful disorder and bloodshed, by which the two French revolutions that Heine had witnessed, were accompanied, disgusted him with the manner in which people try to carry out their Republican ideas; and he, like most clear-thinking men, came to the conclusion that a Republic was too lofty a dream to be realized until a better moral and mental education had been given to the masses. Heine even went so far as to openly proclaim that he was a Monarchist by inclination and conviction; but this he did only in order not to be mistaken for one of those sham democrats whom he despised. His heart loved liberty and hated slavery, and that the Prussian Government did not take him for its friend, nor for the friend of any absolute Monarchy, will be best seen from the fact that the poet lived twenty-five years in exile, and is buried beneath French soil.

The political poems of Heinrich Heine, and especially one entitled "Wintermaerchen," are the most destructive satirical blows that have ever been directed by a writer against the misuse of

Monarchical institutions; and although the poet often checks the Republican enthusiasm which he parades in the beginning, by ridiculing it in the end, this proves just as little that he was not sincere in his propaganda for freedom, as the ironical conclusions of his amatory verses, prove that his heart was void of love. On the contrary, the reader ought never to forget that Heine usually laughs when the tears are ready to come into his eyes; and that, while the surface of his poetry reflects a cold cynicism, there is almost always a warm undercurrent of profound feeling quite perceptible to those who enter deeply enough into the works of this brilliant author.

In his prose writings his sentiments become still more evident, and the same man who wrote: "I am a Royalist from inclination, and in France I have become a Royalist from conviction," never ceased to admire the Republicans of France for the manly daring of their representatives, of whose honesty of sentiment he was persuaded.

In his "Correspondence from Paris" he glorifies with enthusiastic words the martyrdom of the "heroes of St. Méry," and in an article dated June 7th, 1832, he writes: "A handful of patriots, or as

they are called at present, rebels, fought yesterday in the Rue St. Martin against 6,000 men. The heroism of these daring fellows is unanimously admired ; they are said to have performed marvels of valor. They cried continually: 'Vive la République!' but they found no echo in the hearts of the people. Had they instead of these words cried : 'Vive Napoléon!' the soldiers, so it is said amongst all classes to-day, would hardly have fired upon them, and a large number of *ouvriers* would have assisted them. But they disdained to lie. They were the most honest, but certainly not the wisest friends of liberty. I am, God knows! no Republican. I know that when the Republicans get the upper hand, they will cut my throat, for the reason that I do not admire all that they admire ; but burning tears came into my eyes to-day, when I visited the places which are still red with their blood. I would have preferred that I and all my moderate colleagues had perished in place of these Republicans."

The apparent contradictions in Heine's remarks on politics and political principles, induced Boerne to say that Heine had no character, and this

assertion was repeated and endorsed by thousands of the poet's enemies. To this accusation Heine, in his book on Boerne, replies as follows: "What is meant by the word *character*? He possesses character who strives within the determined limits of a determined view of life, who identifies himself, so to say, with this view, and never contradicts himself in his thoughts and sentiments. Of an extraordinary genius, who is ahead of his time, the multitude, therefore, is never able to judge as to whether he has character or not, for the crowd is not far-seeing enough to survey the grand circles within which a great genius moves. The masses, not comprehending the limits of the will and the capability of a man of genius, do not easily discover whether his actions are permissible or necessary, and they, therefore, often attribute to him wilfulness, inconsistency, and want of character."

This may justly be applied to the poet himself. Heine's views were too broad, too lofty, and too ideal, to be correctly understood by his critics; and in his changing praise or blame of the one or the other political system, they saw simply a want of character; while those who really under-

stand his writings, will readily arrive at the conclusion that Heine recognized and approved what was good in all political systems; that he ridiculed the weakness of every party; that he was neither a Bonapartist, a Royalist, nor even a Republican, in the sense most generally accepted, by a genius whose intelligence was above party strife, and, more than all this, that he was a poet.

A very correct appreciation of the apparent contradiction in Heine's writings has been given by Alexander Jung, at the end of his rather severe criticism in the periodical *Literarischer Zodiacus* (1835): "We must come to the conclusion," he says in the article alluded to, "that Heine ought only to be judged as a poet, and as a poet, too, the like of whom has not existed heretofore, and, will probably never be produced by any other nation. From this point of view, all the writings of Heine only form the component parts of a great poem of nature and of humanity, parts which are frequently connected in a rather odd manner, and the transitions in which often appear as sudden as they are artificial, as daring as they are pleasing, as tragically serious as they are comically bur-

lesque. Just as to nature and to humanity there is a peculiar phantasmagoria, the continual restlessness, the eternal stirring and shifting of which immeasurably attract the sentimental observer, teach and charm him, terrify and delight him—with its childish *naïveté* and its horrible cruelty, with its sweet charms and its ghastly spectres,—with the revolting combat of all the elements and the serene peacefulness of a beautiful evening or a lovely legend—with its littleness and its grandeur, its shrill discords and its enchanting harmonies,—so also is it with the songs of our poet. Listen to him without prejudice, and you will pardon him, even when he most cruelly wounds you. After the wildest outbreak of storms and of despair, his German heart will break through, and you may rest on his bosom, for there peace now reigns. Only the peace of the ocean, however, whose calmness does not last long, for below the surface it swells and heaves; one moment the white-crested waves are rising, the next they go down again, a change continual like that of ebb and flood."

The sudden changes in Heine's writings, the brilliant flashes of lightning that shoot across them

in rapid succession, the wild laughter which often interrupts the saddest dream, and the tear of sorrow that frequently ends his most bacchantic rhapsodies — all these are not fragments of a wild chaos, but of a world of poetry created by a divine decree; a world, which, notwithstanding its labyrinthian appearance, is governed by the unchangeable laws of harmony, which all may discover who are willing to throw off preconceived ideas, and to incline their ear to the voice of the poet.

What has been said about Heine's political opinions holds good also in regard to his remarks upon religion. Let superficial critics say whatever they please, Heinrich Heine's mind was essentially of a religious turn; and, although he placed himself above creeds, and ridiculed the idea of one human being trying to impose his notions of God and eternity upon others; although he with the most bitter sarcasm chastised the arrogance of sects that set themselves up as the sole keepers of truth and knowledge; and although he directed his poisoned arrows towards those, who, for centuries, have sown discord over the world and have slaughtered each other under pretence of

fighting for the Lord, while they have been only fighting for themselves ; although Heine never admitted the predominance of any established Church—he in religion just as in politics, admired the good in the different sects and censured their weaknesses, adored the eternal in all creeds, and scorned the transitory, bending his head humbly before the Most High.

Heine was no atheist, but he was honest enough not to pretend to believe what he did not believe ; and rather than deceive himself and others, he uttered a courageous “I do not know” in regard to those things which he did not understand. For this *agnosticism* he has been reproached by his enemies, and has been called a heathen because he was no pharisee. But let the reader judge for himself with respect to Heine's religious sentiments from what follows.

We have already given some extracts from his works with regard to his opinion of the Jewish religion, and will now quote some of his remarks about Christ and Christianity. In his “Reisebilder” he says : “How beautiful, how lovely, how mysteriously sweet was the Christianity of the first centuries when it still resembled its Divine Founder

in the heroism of suffering ! It was then still the fair legend of a mysterious God, who, in the shape of a gentle youth, walked about under the palms of Palestine preaching the doctrine of brotherly love, and revealing that idea of liberty and equality which the sages of later times recognized as true. . . . Compare with that religion of Christ the various forms of Christianity established in different countries as state religions ; for instance, the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church, or that catholicism without poetry called the High Church of England—that pitiful, decayed skeleton of faith, in which all the glow of life is extinguished.”

This remark shows how the poet discriminates between Christianity and its representatives ; and although he severely attacks some Christian sects—whether justly or unjustly we will not here decide—it can be plainly seen that he was no enemy of the religion of Christ.

In another place he says : “ Christianity is a democracy—one God, who has created and upholds the universe, who loves all men alike, and protects all his dominions equally—he is no longer a national but a universal God.” In his book on Boerne, Heine writes : “ What a benign figure

is the God-man! How insignificant in comparison with him, does the hero of the Old Testament appear! Moses loves his people with a pathetic intensity. Like a mother he cares for the future of Israel. Christ loves humanity; he is the sun that sheds the warm rays of his love over the whole earth. What a soothing balm for all wounds of this life are his words! What a healing fountain for all suffering was the blood that flowed on Calvary! The white marble gods of the Greeks were bespattered with his blood; they grew sick from inward awe, and for them there was no recovery! Most of them, it is true, had long borne within them the germs of a wasting malady, and terror only hastened their death." Are these the words of a heathen? And let us add to them the beautiful ode in his "Book of Songs" which is entitled "Peace," and which is perhaps one of the most poetical tributes to Christ extant :—

High in heaven the sun was standing,
By cold-white vapors bedimmed.
The sea was still,
And, musing, I lay by the helm of the vessel,
Dreamily musing—and, half in waking
And half in slumber, I saw in vision

The Saviour of the Earth.

In flowing, snow-white garments

He wandered giant-high

Over land and sea ;

And as a heart in his breast

He bore the sun-orb,

The ruddy, radiant sun-orb,

And the ruddy, radiant, burning heart

Poured forth its beams of mercy

And its gracious and love-blessed light,

Enlightening and warming,

Over land and sea.

Sweetest bell-tones drew us gaily

Here and there, like swans soft-leading

By bands of roses the smooth-gliding ship,

And swam with it sporting to a verdant sea-shore,

Where men were living in a high-towering

And stately town.

Oh, peaceful wonder ! How still the town !

Where the sounds of this world were silent,

Of prattling and sultry employment,

And o'er the clean and echoing highways

Mortals were walking, in pure white garments,

Bearing palm branches,

And whenever two met together,

They saw each other with ready feeling,

And, thrilling with true love and sweet self-denial,

Each pressed a kiss on the forehead,

And looked upon high
To the sun-heart of the Saviour,
Which, gladly atoning his crimson blood,
Flashed down upon them,
And, trebly blessed, thus they spoke :
Blessed be Jesus Christ !

A man who was as thoroughly imbued with the *spirit* of Christianity as Heine, certainly had a right to judge somewhat harshly of its sects, many of which are nothing more than a wretched parody of the first Christian Church. The world ought to pardon the poet if his satirical thrusts are sometimes too severe, and those who accuse him of unjustly attacking any creed in particular, should not forget how fairly he, on the other side, spoke about all of them.

Thus, for instance, although he always ridiculed the abuses of the Catholic Church, he never failed to appreciate what is good in it.

In his "Confessions," he says : " No one ought to accuse me of a fanatical enmity towards the Romish Church, for I have always been lacking that narrow-mindedness necessary for such an animosity. I am too well aware of my intellectual stature not to know that even my

fiercest assaults can do no harm to so colossal a structure as the Church of St. Peter. I could be but a humble laborer at the slow work of pulling down the large blocks of stone, a work which may yet last for many centuries. I am too well versed in history not to recognize the gigantic proportions of that edifice of granite; let people call it the Bastille of the Spirit, let them say that at present it is only defended by invalids,—it remains true, nevertheless, that this Bastille is not so easily taken, and many a young assailant will break his head against its walls. As a thinker, as a metaphysician, I could never help admiring the consistency of the Roman Catholic dogma, and I may also boast of never having attacked, with my wit and satire, either the Catholic dogma or the creed. Men have done me both too much honor and too much dishonor by calling me an intellectual relative of Voltaire. I was always a poet, and therefore the poetic spirit which pervades the symbolism of the Catholic dogma and creed, and which in it blossoms and grows, naturally revealed itself more profoundly to me than to most other mortals. I need not mention that just as there exists in me

no blind hatred of the Roman Church, so there has never been in my mind a petty animosity against its priests. He who knows my gift of satire, and is acquainted with the desire for burlesque, which in the superabundance of my spirit I possess, will bear me witness that I have always been indulgent towards the human weaknesses of the clergy, although in later times the hypocritical, yet venemous rats, who infest the monasteries of Bavaria and Austria—that rotten rabble—have often enough tempted me to attack them. But in the midst of my anger and disgust I have always preserved a certain veneration for the real priesthood, remembering what services they had rendered me in the past; for Catholic priests gave me my first instruction when a child, and they were the first to guide my mental development.” And somewhat later, he says: “Whatever opinion we may hold about the Jesuits, we must admit that in all that relates to the art of instruction, they gave abundant proof of sound practical sense, and though, by their method of teaching, the knowledge of antiquity was only presented in a sadly mutilated form, they at least succeeded in popularizing

ancient culture, that is to say, in making it democratic, and they caused it to spread amongst the masses. Under our present system, it is true, some learned individuals, some aristocrats of intellect, undoubtedly attain to a more intimate acquaintance with antiquity and with the ancients; but the great mass of the people seldom retain any scrap of classical lore, any fragment of Herodotus, any fable of Æsop, any verse of Horace, in a nook of their brains, whereas, formerly, the poor fellows always preserved some old crust of early school-learning, which they kept chewing all the rest of their days. 'A little bit of Latin ornaments a fellow,' an old cobbler once said to me, who still preserved among his recollections some fine passages of Cicero's speeches against Catilina, which he had learned in his youth when he wore the little black gown of a pupil of the Jesuit College, which passages he often, curiously enough, used to quote very *à propos* when attacking our modern demagogues. Teaching was the specialty of the Jesuits, and although they wished to direct it in the interest of their order, the passion for teaching, the only human passion which remained

to them, sometimes gained the upper hand, so that they forgot their object—the suppression of reason in the interest of faith—and instead of making children of men, as they intended, they, on the contrary, and against their own will, by their instruction made men of children. The greatest heroes of the Revolution came from the Jesuit colleges, and without the education which they received there, the great spiritual movement might have been delayed for a whole century.

“Poor fathers of the Society of Jesus! You have become the bugbear and the scapegoat of the Liberals; and while people comprehend how dangerous you are, they do not understand the good you have done.”

These quotations show what Heine thought of Catholicism and its merits; and just as fairly does the poet judge Protestantism.

In his book “Religion and Philosophy in Germany,” the author bursts forth in enthusiastic praise of the German hero of the Reformation, as follows:—

“Glory to Luther! Eternal glory to the dear man whom we have to thank for the deliverance

of our most precious possessions, and on whose charity we are still living ! It surely does not become us to complain of the narrowness of his views. The dwarf standing upon the shoulders of the giant, of course, can see farther than the giant, especially when he puts on spectacles ; but although the elevated position is there, the lofty feeling, the giant heart, is wanting, to which we cannot lay claim. Still less does it become us to judge his failings austere; these failings have been more useful to us than the virtues of a thousand other men. Neither the subtlety of Erasmus nor the benignity of Melancthon would ever have advanced us as much as the occasional outbursts of the divine brutality of Brother Martin." In another place Heine says : " Although we in Germany through the triumph of Protestantism lost much that was poetic, we still obtained manifold compensation. Men became nobler and more virtuous. Protestantism has very favorably influenced that purity of manners and that rigorous performance of duties which we usually call morality ; nay, Protestantism in many communities has taken a direction by which it has become perfectly identical with this morality

itself, the Gospel remaining only the symbol of it. Especially in the lives of the clergy do we see an agreeable change. With the abolition of celibacy there disappeared likewise the vices and the debaucheries of the Monks. Amongst the Protestant clergy we often find men of such exemplary virtue, that even the old Stoics would have had respect for them. One must have occasionally traveled on foot, as do the poor students in Northern Germany, in order to know how much virtue,—and to qualify the word virtue by a beautiful epithet—how much Evangelical virtue is frequently to be found in those humble dwellings of the parsons. How often of a winter evening have I found there a hospitable welcome—I, a stranger, whose only recommendations were hunger and weariness! And when I had eaten well and slept soundly, and was preparing the next morning to continue my wanderings, the old parson in his dressing-gown was sure to appear, in order to bestow his blessing upon me, for my journey—a blessing which never did me any harm; and his good-natured loquacious wife would put into my pocket several slices of buttered bread, which were no less

agreeable, while in the distance were standing, in modest silence, their beautiful daughters with blushing cheeks and a genial sparkle in their violet eyes, the remembrance of which kept my heart warm throughout the whole winter's day."

The above will suffice to show Heine's ideas about religion and creeds in general, and an unprejudiced mind will recognize that the great poet was imbued with a profound religious sentiment. True, he never entered the pale of an established church; but what Lord Byron says in regard to his own belief in "Don Juan," expresses also the feelings of Heine:—

Some kinder casuists are pleased to say,

In nameless print, that I have no devotion;

But set those persons down with me to pray,

And you shall see who has the properest notion

Of getting into heaven the shortest way;

My altars are the mountains and the ocean,

Earth, air, stars—all that springs from the great Whole,

Who has produced and will receive the soul.

(BYRON: *Don Juan*, *Canto III*, st. 104).

It cannot be denied that in Heinrich Heine's writings there are many passages which may be

called irreverent ; but why always pick out just those passages when speaking of the German poet ? Those who have really a desire to find the good and the immortal in the works of an author, will not search in vain in the volumes which Heine has written, for they contain hundreds of pages of prose and of verse which are imbued with the same pure and lofty sentiments as are the quotations given above ; and even many of the remarks of the poet which at the first glance seem like scoffing, on a closer investigation prove to contain only a bitter truth hidden behind a smile.

After having thus explained Heine's views with regard to politics and religion, we shall now try to refute the accusation that the poet was unpatriotic, and that he betrayed his native country—an accusation which is quite as unjust as the assertion that he was void of character in politics, and irreverent in matters of religion.

Heinrich Heine always preserved in his heart a love for his fatherland, and although he severely criticised the unfortunate condition of his native country at the time preceding the year 1848, and ridiculed the narrow-mindedness and one-sidedness of some of his countrymen--

just as Lord Byron denounced the hypocrisy and prudishness of many of his countrymen—yet he always thoroughly appreciated whatever was good in German institutions, and always recognized the bright side of the German character. But the poet was too intelligent to overlook the virtues of other nations, and he drew the attention of his countrymen to what was worthy of imitation amongst foreigners ; for above all he was, as all great men are, a citizen of the world, and only in a secondary point of view considered himself a citizen of Fatherland.

One of Heine's chief complaints was that in Germany there existed no liberty of the press. In his book on "Religion and Philosophy in Germany," he exclaims : "We Germans are the strongest and the most ingenious of nations ; princes of our race sit on every throne in Europe ; our Rothschilds govern the exchanges of the world ; our learned men are the foremost in science ; we have invented gunpowder and the printing-press ; yet whoever fires off a pistol in our country has to pay a fine of three thalers, and if he were to insert in the *Hamburger Correspondent* the following advertisement : ' My

dear spouse has given birth to a little daughter beautiful as the Goddess of Liberty!' Dr. Hoffman * straightway would take his red pencil and strike out 'Liberty.' Will this go on much longer? I know not. But I do know that the question of the freedom of the press, which they are just now discussing so vehemently in Germany is nothing else but the logical consequence of the freedom of thought. For rights of this kind Germany has already given her best blood, and she may yet be called upon to enter the arena once more." If we consider how much Heine had to suffer from the fact that most of his writings were mutilated in the most ridiculous manner by the German censors before they were brought before the public, we can understand the disappointment to which he gives expression in the above passage. The justice of his criticisms is at present generally acknowledged.

Our poet also censured very severely those of his countrymen who depreciated the good qualities of other nations, and placed Germany above the

* The Hamburg censor.

whole world at a time when the wretched condition of the country and the tyranny of the absolute monarchs, to whom the Germans submitted, filled every real patriot with indignation.

In the preface to his "Wintermaerchen" Heine writes: "I hear it said, 'You defame our flag, traitor of your fatherland, friend of the French to whom you wish to make over the free Rhine!' Compose yourselves! I shall not despise your colors, and I shall honor them when they merit it and when they are more than an idle emblem of slavery. Plant the black-red-gold flag on the height of German thought, make it a standard of free humanity, and I will sacrifice my heart's blood for it. Keep calm! I love our fatherland as much as you do. For this love I have lived thirteen years in exile, and for this very love I shall return into exile, perhaps for ever, but surely without wailing and without making the wretched grimace of a martyr. I am a friend of the French as I am a friend of all good and sensible men, and because I am not so stupid as to wish that the Germans and the French, the two chosen people of humanity, should break each other's necks for the benefit of England and Russia, and for the delec-

tation of all the nobility and the clergy in the world. Keep calm! I shall never cede the Rhine to the French, for the simple reason that it belongs to me. Yes, it belongs to me, by an inalienable right of inheritance. I am the free son of the free Rhine. On its shores stood my cradle, and I do not see why the Rhine should belong to any but to those who were born on its banks. Alsace and Lorraine, it is true, I cannot so easily give back to the German Empire as you would do it, for the inhabitants of those provinces are strongly attached to France, on account of the great reforms in their administration introduced by the French, on account of those laws of equality and those free institutions which are pleasing to the mind of a citizen, although even they leave much to be desired by the masses of the people. But the inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine will come back again to Germany when we shall have completed the work begun by the French; when we shall excel the latter in deeds as we already do in thought; when we have the courage to rise up to the final consequences of our thoughts; when we are ready to root out servility even in the last corner where it has hidden itself, namely, in heaven; when we

free from his humiliation the God who lives here on earth in the heart of man ; when we become the saviours of God ; when we restore to their dignities the poor people, who have been cheated out of their inheritance of happiness, of genius that has been insulted, and of beauty that has been degraded, as our great masters, in their words and songs, have asked us to do, and as we, their disciples, wish to do—yes, not only Alsace and Lorraine, but all France will then come to us, all Europe, the whole world—yea, the whole world will become German ! Of this mission and universal dominion of Germany I often dream when I walk under the oaks—that is *my* patriotism.”

Indeed, Heine never was a traitor to his country. He was always enthusiastic with regard to a final understanding between all the nations of the world ; he believed in “internationalism,” and those, who called him a Frenchman instead of a German, did not in the least comprehend his genius or character. He was broad in his views, but he was always a German ; and the French feuilletonist, who thought to flatter the poet by calling him “*un génie presque français*,” received a very apt and cutting reply from Heine’s

friend, O. L. B. Wolff, who wrote: "*Pardon, c'est un génie allemand, qui a le talent d'être aussi un génie français, quand cela lui plait.*"

Eminent Frenchmen always recognized that Heine loved Germany with all his heart; and when Alexandre Dumas *père* heard of the petty calumnies with which Heine's countrymen persecuted the poet, he wrote: "If Germany does not want Heine, we shall willingly adopt him as one of us; but Heine loves Germany much more than she deserves to be loved." Jules Janin also narrates that Heine always vehemently defended Germany when conversing with Frenchmen, and that he never permitted any foreigner to defame his native land in his presence. A proof of this is the fact that, in the beginning of May, 1837, Heinrich Heine fought a duel with a young French scientist, in consequence of a dispute concerning Germany. The quarrel began, as the Parisian papers reported at the time, in a *café*, where some offensive allusions to German manners had been made. Heine, although the remarks did not in any way refer to himself, felt personally insulted as a German, and gave to the Frenchman, who had uttered them a rather

severe punishment, which led to a challenge and ended in a duel with pistols, in which two balls were exchanged on each side. To anyone who has read Heine's complete works, such proofs of Heine's patriotism are scarcely necessary, for what can possibly be more thoroughly German than the whole "Book of Songs"? The sentiment that pervades it comes from the very depths of a German heart; and even the defects that may be attributed to some of Heine's poems, such as too great a melancholy and an idealism occasionally approaching to sentimentalism, are decidedly German characteristics.

Moreover, there occur again and again passages in Heine's writings in which he distinctly expresses his love for his country. We need only cite his witty poem, entitled "Germany,"* the first canto of which begins with:

In the mournful month of November 'twas,
The winter days had returnèd;
The wind from the trees the foliage tore,
When I tow'rds Germany journeyed.

* Translated by Edgar Alfred Bowring, the best of the translators of Heine after the American translator Charles G. Leland.

And when at length to the frontier I came
I felt a mightier throbbing
Within my breast, tears filled my eyes,
And I well-nigh broke into sobbing.

And when I the German language heard,
Strange feelings each other succeeding,
I felt precisely as though my heart
Right pleasantly were bleeding—

and which ends with:

Since I on Germany's ground have trod,
I'm pervaded by magical juices,
The giant has touched his mother once more,
And the contact new vigor produces.

The best proof, however, of Heine's attachment to his native country is, perhaps, that although he resided in France during twenty-five years, he never became naturalized, and for those who, after all that has been said, may still question Heine's patriotism, we quote the following words of Heine that will settle this point definitively. In volume X, page 180, of his "Complete Works," the poet says:

“With respect to that which people usually call patriotism, I have remained a freethinker; but a certain shudder always comes over me when I am asked to do anything that in the least approaches to a denial of my native country. . . . It would be a horrible thought to me—the thought of a madman—if I had to say to myself that I am a German poet, but nevertheless a naturalized Frenchman. I should appear to myself like one of those monstrosities with two heads which are shown in market fairs. It would be insupportable to me, when composing poetry, to think that one head might scan the most unnatural alexandrines in French turkeycock-pathos, while the other poured forth my feelings in the national meter peculiar to the German language. No, the sculptor who has to ornament my last resting-place with an inscription, shall not expose himself to be accused of an untruth when he cuts into the stone the words: ‘Here lies a German Poet.’”

Yes, Heine was a German at heart—and now, after having become acquainted with his sentiments and ideas in general, let us return to

the poet's life and cast a glance at his last years, during which his originality and brilliancy of mind manifested themselves so powerfully, and which are undoubtedly the most remarkable of his life.

It will be of no special interest to the public at large to be made acquainted with all the details of Heine's life; we shall therefore confine ourselves to those points which are necessary to familiarize the reader with the general character of the poet, which is the main object of this essay.

We have mentioned Heine's native city Düsseldorf, and the date of his birth, the 13th of December, 1799; we have spoken of his youth and his Jewish parentage, respecting which the reader will find abundant details in the "Memoirs;" and we have also mentioned that, after having finished his university studies, he, for political reasons, decided to leave Germany and to go to Paris, where, after the year 1831, he had his domicile. Previously to this he had resided a short time in Berlin, and traveled some months in England and Italy.

Before Heine went to France, his fame as a poet and humorist had already spread over Germany, and he had become the most celebrated German writer of the day. This fame was especially due to the select poems which are to be found in the "Book of Songs," and to the satirical prose of his "Reisebilder." But while his beautiful lyrics were sung in every place where the German language was spoken, and while his *bons-mots* were repeated in all the German salons, the poet himself had to hasten across the frontier, for the Prussian Government threatened to deprive him of his liberty, because in his writings he had bitterly offended a number of autocratic sovereigns, who began to see in him their most dangerous enemy.

During the first period of his sojourn in the French capital, Heine was delighted with his new residence. The *esprit* of the French was congenial to him; he admired their liberal institutions; and the beauties of Paris as a city, and the attractions which it offers to every new-comer were praised in high terms by the German author. He soon felt perfectly at home

in his new surroundings, and when he heard that the German composer, Ferdinand Hiller, whom he had met in Paris, was about to leave for Germany, he wrote to him: "If people should ask you how I am satisfied here, tell them, 'like a fish in the water;' or, rather, say to them, 'that when one fish in the ocean asks the other how he is feeling, he receives for answer: I feel like Heine in Paris.'"

When, before his departure for France, Heine was taking leave of his publisher, Julius Campe, in Hamburg, the latter advised him to abstain from writing on politics, and to choose more peaceful subjects for his brilliant pen.

This advice of a friend was perhaps the reason that, during the first few months after his arrival in the French capital, the poet really wrote much more reservedly than formerly, and published some very realistic essays on French art for a German paper called the *Morgenblatt*, their chief subject being the French exhibition of paintings of the year 1831. But the fall of Warsaw, and the ignominious rôle which the German cabinets played in regard to unfortunate Poland, filled the sympathetic heart of Heinrich Heine with

disgust and indignation, and he determined to employ his talent in fighting against the reactionary party that tried to annihilate in Europe all liberty and all popular rights.

In order to secure a large circle of readers for his articles, he decided to send them to the most important journal then existing in Germany, viz., the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*, the editor of which, Baron Cotta, was his friend. Heine knew that he would be obliged to modify his style very much, if he wished his articles to appear in this paper, as the Bavarian censor would not have permitted anything to pass which might seem too free or too liberal; but he also knew that he was able to disguise his meaning so that no one could accuse him openly, and that nevertheless his intention would be plain to the intelligent reader. From this point of view we must look upon Heine's articles in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, which later on were collected in book form by the author under the title "Französische Zustände," and which have done not a little for the promotion of constitutional liberty in Germany, although they are written so moderately that it is sometimes difficult to recognize in them

the destructive pen of the author of the "Reisebilder."

With respect to these articles Heine remarks : "A writer on politics is necessarily obliged to submit to many restrictions for the sake of the cause which he is defending. There are plenty of obscure sheets in which one might pour out freely all the fiery indignation of one's soul ; but these sheets are only read by a poor and very unimportant public ; and to write for it would be just as foolish as to gossip about politics before the guests of a beer-shop or of a coffee-house, as is the custom of many of our 'great patriots.' Much better is it to suppress our fire, and to publish our ideas in sober words, or even to speak in a disguised manner in a paper that is justly called a leading paper, and which serves to instruct hundreds of thousands of readers in every part of the globe. Even the most pitiful mutilation of our words may here be effective, and even the slightest hint may prove a seed that will bring forth rich fruits in some unknown soil."

After his essays on politics for the instruction of the Germans, Heine made it his chief object to acquaint the French with the intellectual

condition of his native country; and in the beginning of 1833 he contributed to the newly-founded Parisian journal, *l'Europe Littéraire*, a series of articles on modern German literature, which were especially intended to destroy the wrong impressions that Madame de Stäel had given to her countrymen in her book, "De l'Allemagne." As political topics were excluded from the programme of *l'Europe Littéraire*, Heine could not write much in it about the social and political condition of Germany, but he treated this subject more at length in three articles which he published in 1834, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and which later formed the basis for the book, entitled "Zur Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland." These articles to the French papers, with the addition of some smaller essays, were embodied in a volume which bore the same title as the book of the French authoress, *viz.*, "De l'Allemagne," and which made Heine very popular all over France, while the German edition of the book was not very favorably received.

Heine's next work was the publication of his so-called "Salon," an interesting series of essays

begun in 1834 during a short trip to Hamburg, and not concluded until 1840. In 1839 he also wrote an essay on "Shakespeare's Matrons and Maids," and in 1840 appeared a violent personal attack on Boerne, a work which, notwithstanding the brilliant style in which it was written, did harm to the reputation of its author, because of some very unjust remarks, that were evidently the outgrowth of personal feeling, and the publication of which he afterwards very much regretted. Then followed again a series of articles on France for the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, begun in 1840, and finished in 1844; these were afterwards collected by him under the title of "Lutetia." In 1848 appeared his long satirical poem called "Atta Troll," containing many severe remarks upon the condition of Germany in general, being chiefly a burlesque of the over-sentimental, the so-called Romantic school of Germany.

Meanwhile, Heine had personally become very well acquainted with all the important French authors of his time; but, unfortunately, he had also plunged deeply into the vices of the French capital. Théophile Gautier, the well-known writer,

who was a friend of Heine, judged him correctly when he said that he was a spendthrift, not only as regards money, but also as far as his health and, above all, his mind, were concerned. It is too painful a theme to give an account of the many dissipations of Heine during his sojourn in Paris, Heine himself, surfeited at last with his excesses, sought to put an end to them by uniting his fate to that of a woman.

This woman, who was far below him in intelligence, was Mathilde Crescence Mirat, whose acquaintance he had made in 1835, and who, by the gaiety of her disposition, and by a certain *naïveté*, very attractive to Heine, who had meanwhile become *blasé*, was able to secure his permanent attachment. Although he lived with her at first in a so-called *ménage Parisien*, that is to say, without having their union legalized, he always treated her as a wife, and later on, just before a duel which he fought in 1841, with a certain Dr. Strauss, he married Mathilde Mirat, in order not to leave her in a false position, in case he should be killed. As Mlle. Mirat was a Catholic, he had to procure a dispensation from the archbishop—which is required in cases where

a Catholic wishes to marry a person belonging to another faith—and to sign a document in which he agreed that his children, if any were born to him should be brought up in the Catholic religion. The marriage took place on the 31st of August in the Church of St. Sulpice.

In 1844 Heine published a new collection of poems, under the title of "Neue Gedichte," to which was added, as an appendix, the satirical poem entitled "Germany, a Winter Tale," four stanzas of which we have already quoted. This satire, under the guise of a description of a journey from Paris to Hamburg, is a severe comment upon the social evils of Germany; and although its conclusion is rather coarse, it ought to be read by those who wish to become acquainted with Heine's brilliant wit and easy versification*.

In 1845 the life which Heine had led began to tell upon him, and a severe attack of the terrible disease to which he eventually succumbed, was a prelude to the martyrdom that he suffered during the rest of his life. As early as 1837

* A very fair English version of it has been made by

the poet had been troubled with an affection of the eyes, and now the pain returned in a more violent degree than ever. The condition of the right eye, the pupil of which became extended almost to the size of the iris, grew very alarming, and it was only through the excellent care of Dr. Sichel, a celebrated oculist, that Heine was saved from blindness. Unfortunately, just when there was a perceptible improvement, the poet heard the news that a rich uncle of his, the banker Salomon Heine of Hamburg, from whom he had hitherto received a small annual pension, had died without making provision in his will for the continuation of this pension, although he had left a fortune of many millions to his sons, and large sums of money to other relatives. Heinrich Heine, whose only fixed income had been the sum which he annually received from this uncle, and which he hoped would be continued to his wife after his death, was so startled by the news, and thrown into such a state of excitement, that his

Mr. Edgar Alfred Bowring, who has translated most of Heine's poems, and is published in Bohn's Library (George Bell & Sons, London).

physical condition grew suddenly very serious and some of his friends despaired of his life. He recovered, however ; but the left eye now became paralyzed, and he could no longer raise the eyelid, while at the same time the paralysis extended gradually over the chest. In May, 1845, the poet wrote to his friend Laube : " My disease is paralysis, which is increasing continually. I cannot write, and I cannot read six lines in succession." Towards the end of the year his condition improved a little, and on the 3rd of January, 1846, he wrote to Varnhagen : " If the paralysis, which like an iron band presses my chest together, should decrease, my old energy will awaken again ; but I am afraid a long time will pass before this will be the case. The manner in which my own family betrayed me, while I was without weapons and entirely confiding in them, has struck me like a thunderbolt coming from a clear sky, and has almost killed me. He who closely investigates the circumstances, will arrive at the conclusion that the whole affair is nothing else than an attempt to assassinate me ; cringing mediocrity, envious of Genius, which has been waiting for a chance for 20 years, has

finally conquered. It is in fact but an old story which is repeated again and again. Yes, I am sick to death, but my soul has not suffered much; a weary flower, somewhat drooping but not withered, which still has its roots firmly planted in the ground of Truth and Love."

Heine did not blame his uncle for the blow he had received, as much as he did his other relatives, whom he suspected of having conspired against him, and more especially his cousin, Carl Heine, who was the principal heir of Salomon Heine, and who, although he had come into possession of millions, after his father's death refused to pay anything to the poet. This refusal was all the more heartless, and wounded Heinrich Heine's heart the more deeply for the reason that he had hitherto confided absolutely in this cousin, and had even nursed him, at the risk of his own life, during an attack of cholera, while on a visit to Paris.

A reconciliation between the two cousins fortunately took place somewhat later, and the poet obtained from Carl Heine the grant of an annual pension, and the promise that this pension should after his death be continued to his wife; but

although the poet, in the different testaments found, alludes in friendly terms to his cousin, it is not likely that he ever regained full confidence in him. Instead, however, of entering upon a long discussion of this point, we shall only mention that Heinrich Heine, for the money which he received from his cousin, had to promise Carl Heine never to publish anything against him or his family, and that he was moreover informed that, in case his wife, after his death, should publish any writings containing unfavorable allusions to the family of Carl Heine, the pension of Mathilde Heine would be immediately withdrawn.* How bitterly the poet, who above all loved freedom of thought and action, must have felt when, for a paltry sum of money he had to submit to such conditions, every one familiar with Heine's character will easily conceive; and in view of these circumstances, it will be difficult to believe in a complete reconciliation between the two cousins,

* This is the reason why the fragment of the "Memoirs" contained in this volume has not been given to the public until now, for Madame Heine was afraid that there might be passages in it which would induce her husband's relatives to deprive her of the pension.

in spite of the passages in the different testaments of the poet above alluded to. (A newly-discovered fragment of a draft of one of Heine's testaments will be found in this volume.)

A clear light is thrown upon the whole matter in question by a letter which the poet wrote to his publisher and friend Julius Campe, and which contains the following words: "My confidence in my family is gone, and Carl Heine, however rich he may be, and however amiable he may have become towards me, would be the last person to whom I would apply in any difficulty.

. My dear friend, I am in a very bad condition at present, although all the world pets me and flatters me, with the exception of my miserable relatives. As regards the latter, Laube's letter to the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, in which he accuses them openly of a cowardly assassination, has here and everywhere been received with both approbation and indignation. With regard to Carl Heine, he has not told you the whole truth, for I have absolutely no reason to be satisfied with him; that he has agreed to pay to my widow *half* of my pension is, I suppose, not such an extraordinary act of magnanimity

I wish, intentionally, to let you know how matters stand with respect to the conditions of the reconciliation which Carl Heine has imposed upon me, and on which account his purse has not in any way suffered." In another letter the poet writes to Campe: "My sickness is not only a blood-sucking, but a money-eating animal You know that Carl Heine's magnanimity does not suffice for half my wants. My cousin has, under existing circumstances, done enough, and from him I can not, nor do I wish, to claim anything more. Begging is a very disagreeable thing, but begging and not getting anything is still more disagreeable; actual starvation would be preferable to this. I therefore have made up my mind once for all to rely no more upon that source."

In the spring of 1847 his disease had already made fearful progress, and at that time Heine wrote to Heinrich Laube: "If I had not my wife and her parrot* to take care of, I would, God pardon me my sin, put an end to my

* Madam Heine's chief pet, for which she showed more affection even than toward her husband.

misery like a Roman." Heine bore his sufferings, however, with much fortitude; he even analyzed his disease in its gradual development in the same cynical manner in which he had hitherto described defects in others. One day he said to Laube, who had come to Paris to visit him: "My sickness has its seat in the marrow of my life. Let the physicians try to console me as much as they please, I have nothing to expect but a pitiable and slow martyrdom, probably full of all sorts of variations—this latter is at least something. If one awakes suddenly some morning deaf, he forgets, for a moment at least, that he is already blind. And what is it all for? For nothing. I do not need to become better, and Jehovah I've always feared; He ought not to let me be martyred. At best, the history of my 'passion' is only a puff for the new edition of my collected works, and for the benefit of Campe and my wife."

Heine spent some time in a hospital, but without any perceptible improvement in his condition, and in the beginning of May, 1848, he walked out for the last time.

"Through the streets of Paris," says Meissner

in his "Reminiscences of Heine," "the crowds were moving, swayed by their leaders, as by a storm, hither and thither. The poet, half blind and half paralyzed, dragging himself along by the help of a stick, tried to get out of the bustle of the streets, by taking refuge in the Louvre near by. He entered the halls of the palace, which in those turbulent times were almost empty, and he soon found himself in the large one on the ground floor, where the antique gods and goddesses are placed. All at once he stood before the ideal of beauty, before the smiling, enchanting goddess, the marvelous work of some unknown master, the Venus of Milo, who in the course of centuries has lost her arms but not her fascinations. Startled by the sight of her, moved, struck, almost horrified, the sick man staggered back and dropped into a chair, and hot and bitter tears ran down his cheeks." From that day the poet never left his bed except, for a change of position, to take rest in a large arm-chair propped up with cushions.

At the end of May, in the year of the Revolution (1848) he took up his residence at No. 64, Grande Rue, Passy, where, during the hot

summer months at least, he was not exposed to the dust and bad air of the city ; but in October he again removed to Paris where he took rooms at No. 50, Rue d'Amsterdam. The apartments of the poet were in the second story of the house in the rear, and the windows opened upon the court. Heine had chosen this residence in order not to be disturbed by the noise of the street ; unfortunately, in thus escaping from the noise, he deprived himself of every breath of fresh air, no green branch was visible from his window, and no song of birds entered into the sad sick-chamber. The stairs which led up to his rooms were so steep that it was impossible to carry the invalid from time to time out into the open air, which might have given him some relief, and during the following summers pecuniary embarrassments prevented him from again taking up a residence in the country. Besides, the poet's nerves were fearfully tried by the piano-drumming of some ladies, who for several years lived opposite to him ; and the apartment in the Rue d'Amsterdam is the one where he suffered for so many years, and which Heine, in bitter sarcasm, called his "mattress-grave."

During the winter of 1848-49, the poet's sufferings became almost insupportable, for spinal consumption had begun, and in order to obtain even temporary rest, the sick man had to take every day a considerable quantity of opium. "His blindness increased more and more; his legs had become emaciated and soft," write's Heine's biographer, Adolph Strodtmann, "his back began to curve, and in order to somewhat relieve the pain produced by the cramps in his spine, they had to cauterize it." When his friend Meissner visited Heine in the year 1849, the poet described to him the horrible pain which consumed him. He related how at night the wish to commit suicide often came over him, but the thought of his beloved wife, and of the many works which he was anxious to finish, gave him strength to resist it; and then in a hollow voice, while a frightfully sad expression passed over his features, he exclaimed: "Think of Günther, Bürger, Kleist, Hölderlin, Grabbe, and the unfortunate Lenau! There rests a curse upon the German poets!"

During the first period of his sickness, Heine often expressed the wish to be carried back to Germany in order there to quietly end his

days. Of this he spoke frequently. But there was great difficulty in the way of executing this plan. "I should have to get a special wagon constructed," he one day said to Adolph Stahr, "and that would cost much money; and, after all," he added, smilingly, "the thing to be transported is, perhaps, not worth the expense." For some time the poet was treated by French physicians, but he did not think much of their skill. The only doctor in whom he had faith was a Hungarian physician by the name of Gruby, who certainly deserved his full confidence; but the disease of the unfortunate man was beyond human help, and all that medical aid could do was to alleviate his horrible pain.

In the morning Heine usually took a bath, when his condition permitted him to do so. His nurse, a strong mulatto woman, lifted him out of his "mattress-grave," and carried him, as if he were a child, to the bathing tub. The sick man did not lie on a regular bed, but upon half-a-dozen mattresses, which were heaped one upon the other, because his sore body had to be protected against contact with everything that was hard and might offer to it the slightest

resistance. "There, you see how people here carry me in their hands," Heine one day said to a friend who saw him carried by this nurse from the arm-chair to the bed.

A great annoyance to the poet were the numerous visits which, during the first years of his illness, he received from people who came to see him out of curiosity rather than from sympathy. On the other hand, there came many persons to the dying poet whom he was glad to see; and letters full of sympathy and consolation were sent to him from all parts of the world. Among those of his countrymen who visited Heine during his sickness, and who were very welcome to him, were Alfred Meissner, Count Auersperg, Friedrich Hebbel, Adolf Stahr, Fanny Lewald, Dr. Gustav Kolb, August Lewald, Heinrich Laube, Prince Pückler, Ferdinand Hiller, Joseph Lehmann, Dr. Leopold Zung, and a few others. Among the French friends of the poet who called from time to time, were Alexandre Dumas *père*, and Théophile Gautier; once even Béranger, notwithstanding his 75 years, mounted up the steep stairs leading to the sick-chamber of the German author. The

most frequent visitors, however, were the unfortunate Gérard de Nerval and St. René Taillendier, who assisted Heine in the most generous manner in the French translation of his works.

As is but too often the case under such circumstances, the visitors, towards the end of the poet's life, decreased in number, and the invalid grew more and more lonely, so that one day, when the composer Berlioz called upon him, Heine exclaimed, smilingly: "What! somebody pays me a visit! Berlioz always remains original."

Year after year the fearful disease dragged on, and all the world was astonished that Heine, whose condition was such that everybody expected a speedy dissolution, should live so long. It was probably on account of his great mental energy that the poet lived, for, notwithstanding the prophecies of the physicians to the contrary, the invalid continued his miserable existence for eight long years. A great consolation to Heinrich Heine during his cruel suffering was the serene and cheerful temperament of his wife, who often, by her liveliness and over-abundance of spirit, made the martyr forget his actual condition. He had become so accustomed to his Mathilde, that

her presence alone was soothing to him, and even in the midst of the greatest pain, he felt relieved when he heard her voice.

Heine's wife was of a very happy disposition. The illness of her husband seemed not to depress her feelings at all, and she never thought of his death as a probable event; kind-hearted but somewhat frivolous, she tried to cheer him whenever she was in his presence, and her own good spirits often revived his. It cannot be said that she deserved special credit for her manner of acting toward her husband, for her merits were of a negative rather than of a positive character; but for Heinrich Heine it was, perhaps, fortunate that she manifested no more sympathy during his illness, as her sorrow would have added to his own. Nevertheless, although he was so kind, and had become too much attached to his wife to blame her want of deeper feeling, of which he was well aware, he occasionally, though jestingly, showed his displeasure on account of Mathilde's conduct. "Oh, what a night we had!" he one day exclaimed to his friend Meissner. "I have not been able to close an eye. We have had an accident in our house; the cat fell from the

mantel-piece and scratched her right ear ; it even bled a little. That gave us great sorrow. My good Mathilde remained up, and applied cold poultices to the cat all night long. For *me* she never remains awake."

On another occasion he said to a lady who visited him : "I felt rather anxious yesterday. My wife had finished her toilette as early as two o'clock, and had gone to take a drive. She promised to be back at four o'clock. It struck half-past five, and she was not back yet. The clock struck eight, and my anxiety increased. Had she perhaps got tired of her sick husband, and eloped with a cunning seducer ? In my painful doubt I sent the sick-nurse to her chamber to see whether 'Cocotte,' the parrot, was still there. Yes, 'Cocotte' was still there. That set me at ease again, and I began to breathe more freely. Without 'Cocotte' the dear woman would never go away."

It is remarkable how Heine, in the midst of the most frightful suffering, kept his mind clear and was even able to jest. Not for a moment did he lose the power of thinking logically. On the contrary, the longer his pain lasted, the more he became master of himself.

"My spirit is already removed from out this petty world," he wrote in 1852 to Campe; "let the worms feed on my body, I do not grudge them their repast, and I am only sorry that I cannot offer them anything but bones." In another letter he writes: "My body suffers much, but my soul is as placid as a lake, and sometimes the most beautiful sunrises and sunsets are reflected in it."

During his long period of sickness Heine grew more serious and earnest than he had been before, and he destroyed a portion of his MSS., which contained, as he said, rather irreverent remarks about religion, and also some rather severe ones about persons still living. "When the paper was crackling in the flames," he wrote to Campe, "a kind of curious feeling came over me. I doubted whether I acted like a hero or like a madman, and near me I heard the voice of some Mephistopheles whispering: The Lord will pay you a much better fee for that than Campe, and besides you need not bother yourself about the printing, nor will you have the trouble of bargaining with Campe about the MSS., as you would about a pair of old trousers." In the same letter the poet said: "Do not believe the

rumor in circulation that I have lately become a pious lambkin. The religious change which I have undergone is only a spiritual one, and the consequence of an act of thinking rather than of sweet sentimentalism, and my sick-bed is not the cause of it, of that I am sure. Great, lofty thoughts, full of awe, have come over me. But they were mental sparks of lightning and not phosphorous vapors”

If the remark of Heine that his sick-bed had nothing to do with his changed manner of thinking in regard to religious subjects, seems at the first glance like a contradiction of the actual facts, this contradiction will, on a closer investigation, be found to be only an apparent one. The suffering and the loneliness of the invalid undoubtedly favored such a change, but they were not the cause of it; the real cause lay in the heart of the poet, who, as we have said, was always religious in sentiment and longed for the truth. Heine saw plainly how erroneous some of his former opinions had been, when, to his present wretched physical condition, he applied some of the doctrines which he had believed to be correct while he still enjoyed good health,

and was still in comparatively easy circumstances. It was no weakness of his mental powers nor a fear of punishment, but a recognition of the truth that made the poet change his ideas ; and he, therefore, had a perfect right to say that his sick-bed was not the cause of the change in his opinion, and that he was overcome by sparks of lightning and not deceived by luminous vapors.

Pious people said that the fear of death had brought the lost lamb back to the fold ; the Freethinkers said that Heine had grown weak in intellect on account of his sickness. Both were mistaken. The poet was neither afraid nor weak in mind ; he had only passed through another experience of life, and, as he was accustomed to do, he had willingly learned a lesson from this new experience. Faithful to his character, he proclaimed loudly what he thought, and with absolute indifference as to what people might say about it. He never hid his opinion, no matter whether it wounded or flattered, whether it shocked or delighted those who heard it. Keeping this peculiarity of Heine's character always in mind, the following extract from the second preface to his book on "Religion and Philosophy in

Germany" will be easily understood. This preface, which was written four years before Heine's death, contains the poet's own explanation of his change of opinion in regard to religion, and his real thoughts will, without difficulty, be separated from the sarcasms which abound in the passage we quote, as they do in all the writings of Heine.

"The book now before the reader," he writes in the preface alluded to, "is a fragment, and must remain a fragment. To confess the truth, I would rather leave the book unpublished altogether, for the reason that since its first appearance my views on many subjects, and especially with regard to sacred things, have considerably changed, and much that I then asserted is now opposed to my better convictions. But the arrow belongs no longer to the archer when it flies from the string of his bow, and the word belongs no longer to the speaker, after it has sprung from his lips and is multiplied by the press. Besides, I should, by not having this book published, and by withdrawing it from my 'Collected Works,' interfere with the rights of others. I might, it is true, as some authors are in the habit of doing in such cases, have recourse to

the expedient of softening the expressions, or of veiling them with phrases; but I detest, from my very soul, all equivocal language. I hate the hypocritical flowers and cowardly fig-leaves. Under all circumstances, there remains to an honest man the inalienable right of openly acknowledging his errors — and this right I shall here exercise fearlessly. I therefore candidly confess that all that I have said in this book, especially in reference to the great question of the existence of a God, is as false as it is unadvised. Equally unadvised and as false is also the assertion, repeated after the schools, that Deism is, in theory, destroyed, and that it now only drags out a miserable existence in the material world. No—it is not true that the *Critic of Reason*, which has annihilated the arguments in favor of the existence of a God, as we have known them from the time of Anselm of Canterbury, has likewise made an end of God Himself. Deism still lives; it lives its most living life. It is not dead, and least of all has it been killed by the latest German philosophy. This fine-spun Berlin dialectic is incapable of enticing a dog from the fireside; it cannot kill a cat, how much less a God.

I know from experience the little effect which it had upon my own body and how slight is the danger of its killing. It is continually killing people, and yet they remain alive. The door-keeper of the Hegelian school, the grim Ruge, once stoutly maintained that he had slain me with his porter's staff in the *Hallische Chronik*, though at that very time I was promenading the boulevards of Paris, merry and healthy and more immortal than ever. Poor Ruge! he himself, at a later period, could not refrain from a hearty burst of laughter, when I told him that here in Paris I had never so much as seen that terribly homicidal paper called the *Hallische Chronik*, and my full ruddy cheeks, as well as the hearty appetite with which I swallowed oysters, convinced him how little I deserved to be called a corpse. In fact, in those days I was still healthy and sleek, I stood in the zenith of my fat, and I was as reckless as King Nebuchadnezzar before his fall.

“Alas! only a few years have passed, and a mental and bodily change has taken place in me. How often since those days have I thought of the history of the Babylonian King, who believed

that he himself was God, but who, having miserably fallen from the height of his arrogance, crawled like an animal on the ground, eating grass (it was probably salad)! This legend is to be found in the splendid and impressive book of Daniel, a legend which I recommend to the worthy Ruge, but also to the still more inveterate sinner amongst my friends Herr Marx, and Herren Feuerbach, Daumer, Bruno Bauer, Hengstenberg, and whatever else may be their names. There are a good many more such beautiful and noteworthy stories in the Bible, that deserve their attention; for example, just at the beginning, the story of the forbidden tree in Paradise and of the snake—that little professor who taught the whole Hegelian philosophy six thousand years before Hegel's birth. This blue-stocking without feet, very ingeniously demonstrated how the Absolute consists in the identity of being and becoming, how man becomes God through cognition, or, what amounts to the same thing, how God in man attains to self-consciousness. This formula is not so clear as the original words: 'When ye eat of the tree of knowledge, ye shall be as gods.' Madam Eve understood only one

thing in the whole demonstration, namely, that the fruit was forbidden, and, because it was forbidden, the good woman ate of it. But scarcely had she eaten the tempting apple, when she lost her innocence, her *naïveté*. She discovered that she was much too naked for a person of her position, the ancestress of so many future emperors and kings, and she wished for a dress. True, only a dress of fig leaves, because at that time there existed no Lyonesse silk manufactories, and because in Paradise there were no milliners and dressmakers—oh, Paradise! Strange, as soon as a woman attains reasoning self-consciousness, her first thought is of a new dress. This whole Bible-story keeps running through my mind, and especially the speech of the serpent. I would like to place it as a motto at the beginning of this book, in the same manner in which we often see at the gates of princely gardens, a tablet with the warning inscription: ‘Here are man-traps and spring-guns.’

“In my latest book, ‘Romanzero,’ I have already referred to the transformation that has taken place in my mind in regard to sacred things. A good many inquiries have since been

made of me with Christian importunity, as to the manner in which the better light has dawned upon me. Pious souls seem anxious to be cheated by me, with the tale of some miracle, and they have a desire to know whether, like Saul, I had seen a light on my way to Damascus, or whether, like Balaam, the son of Beor, I was riding on a restive ass, which suddenly opened its mouth and began to speak as a man. No, ye faithful believers—I never journeyed to Damascus, nor do I know anything about it, save that recently the Jews, who live there, were accused of eating old Capuchin monks, and I might never have known the name of the city, had I not read the "Song" in which King Solomon compares the nose of his sweetheart to a tower that looketh toward Damascus. Nor have I ever seen an ass, I mean a four-footed one, which spake as a man, though I have often enough met men, who, whenever they opened their mouths, spake like asses. In truth, it was neither a vision, nor a seraphic revelation putting me into a trance, nor a voice from heaven, nor any strange dream, nor the magic of miracles that put me in the way of salvation, and I owe my enlightenment simply to

the reading of a book. A book? Yes, and it is an old homely-looking book, modest as Nature and as natural; a book which has as work-a-day and unassuming an appearance as the sun that warms us, and the bread that nourishes us; a book that looks as familiarly at us, and is as full of kind blessings as the old grandmother who reads daily in it with her dear trembling lips, and with spectacles upon her nose—and this book is called quite briefly *the Book*, the Bible. Rightly do men sometimes call it the Holy Writ, for he who has lost his God, can find Him again in this book, and toward him who has never known Him, there breathes from out this book the breath of the Divine Word. The Jews, who are good judges of precious things, knew right well what they did, when, at the burning of the second Temple, they abandoned the golden and silver implements of sacrifice, the candlesticks and lamps, and even the breast-plate of the High Priest adorned with large jewels, and saved only the Bible. This was the real treasure of the Temple, and, God be thanked! it became not a prey to the flames, nor to the fury of Titus Vespasian, the wretch who, as the Rabbis tell

us, met with such a dreadful death. A Jewish priest, who lived at Jerusalem two hundred years before the burning of the second temple, during the glorious era of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and who was called Joshua-ben-Siras-ben-Eliezer, has given to us the thoughts of his time regarding the Bible, in a collection of apophthegms or *Meschalim*, and I will here quote his beautiful words. They are sacerdotally solemn and at the same time as refreshing as if they had but yesterday welled forth from a living human breast. They read as follows:—

‘All this is the Book of the Covenant made with the most High God, viz., the law that Moses recommended as a precious treasure to the house of Jacob. From it there floweth wisdom as the water of Pison when it is great, and as the water of Tigris when it overspreadeth its banks in spring. From it there floweth instruction as the Euphrates when it is great, and as Jordan in the harvest. From it there breaketh forth chastisement as the light, and as the water of the Nile in autumn. There has never existed he who hath exhausted all that it teacheth, and there will never exist he who will discover all its

meaning; for its depth is richer than any sea, and its word deeper than any abyss.' ”

Heine's sickness had taught him that Hegel's philosophy, however attractive it may be to those who would like to quiet their conscience by some plausible reasons for enjoying life to its utmost limits, proves unsatisfactory to those who in sickness and sorrow need consolation. Those of our readers who wish to become more intimately acquainted with Heine's views with regard to this philosophy, will find some interesting passages referring to it in his little book entitled “*Geständnisse*” (Confessions), which he wrote during the winter 1853-1854.

Notwithstanding the fact that Heine now adopted religious views—or, rather, notwithstanding that he occupied himself more with religious subjects than formerly, for, as we have said, he never was really irreligious, although he had his periods of doubt—he remained unchanged in his opinions regarding creeds, and gave no preference to any of the established Churches. A proof of this is the fact, that in his testament he expressly forbade the performance of any religious ceremony at his funeral.

Often during his illness he referred, in his conversations with his friends, to the immortality of the soul. "In regard to this subject," he said once to Adolph Stahr, "I have very contradictory feelings. All my reason, all my knowledge tells me that the belief in an existence after death is an absurdity; nor is there, in the Old Testament, a trace of it to be found. . . . My reason fully convinces me that we shall cease to exist after death, but my feeling is unable to grasp this thought. I cannot grasp it, I cannot comprehend it, while I still exist. I believe that only an egotist can become familiar with the thought of a discontinuation of our existence after death. A loving heart, notwithstanding all knowledge, will not be able to comprehend it. I, for instance, cannot believe that I shall leave my wife for ever, and I always tell her that I will re-appear to her, though under some very inconspicuous shape (for she is afraid of ghosts), in order to take care of her affairs, of which she understands nothing." And in his preface to the "Romanzero," Heine says: "The *horror vacui* which has been attributed to Nature, is innate, rather, in the human heart. Compose

yourself, dear reader, there will be an existence after death, and in another world we also shall meet our seals* again."

However irreverent may be the manner in which the poet treats the question, it is not difficult to perceive his belief in the immortality of the soul. He was, of course, too intelligent not to see that immortality cannot be proved by reasoning; but he trusted to the correctness of his feelings concerning the matter. And, in fact, have we any better, or any other guide for the cognition of the Highest, or have we any other reason for our belief in immortality, than these feelings of the heart, these poetical longings for something better, this vague and yet certain hope of another life? Experience teaches us to place these feelings, of which we usually speak as our "conscience," in many cases above our reason, and that this conscience is often our only true guide.

At one time it was Heine's belief that Kant, in showing that by our reason we cannot prove the existence of God, or the immortality of the

* Referring to the belief of the Esquimaux.

soul, had also wished to deny God's existence and the soul's immortality, and it was while under this wrong impression that Heine wrote his book "De l'Allemagne." Towards the close of his life, however, when his thoughts dwelt more earnestly upon philosophic questions, he recognized his mistake, and he saw that the philosophy of Kant, while it demonstrates the limits of reason, does not in any way prove that there may not exist some things, which lie quite beyond the limits of our understanding; and we certainly have good grounds for a belief in their actual being, when we consider that all through our life our feelings point towards some world of light, whose rays seem to penetrate even to our present existence.

Upon his "mattress-grave," in the Rue d'Amsterdam, in the midst of the most fearful suffering, Heine produced several works of the greatest literary merit. In 1850 and 1851 the "Romanzero" was composed, a collection of poems in which almost all the different phases of the poet's thought are represented, and which is a brilliant specimen of the great variety of forms which Heine's poetical talent displays.

In that part which bears the title "Historien," we find some ballads which are among the best specimens of this kind of writing in existence, and two of them more especially, "The Battle-field of Hastings" and "The Poet Ferdusi," on account of their perfection of form and their beauty of sentiment, deserve the highest praise. The satirical ballad "Vitzliputzli," in which Heine directs his sarcasm against the Spaniards led by Cortez, when, under the pretence of fighting for the Lord, they murdered the poor natives who had extended to them their hospitality, is also very remarkable.

Another portion of this work entitled "Lamentationen" contains chiefly poems full of bitter sarcasm, alluding to the hypocrisy and injustice of this world. The most noteworthy among them are those called the "Lazarus Poems," of which we will here quote a small number from Bowring's translation.

One directed against the apparently unjust distribution of wealth in the world reads as follows:—

He who has already much
Finds his wealth increasing faster;
Who but little, is of all
Soon bereft by some disaster.

But if thou hast nothing, friend,
Go and hang thyself this minute ;
Only they who've aught on earth
Have a claim for living in it.

In another poem his complaint takes the following form : —

When fortune on me shed her ray,
The gnats around me danced all day ;
Plenty of friends then cherish'd me,
And all, in fashion brotherly,
My viands with me tasted,
And my last penny wasted.

Fortune has fled, and void is my purse,
My friends have left, for better, for worse ;
Extinguished is each sunny ray ;
Around me the gnats no longer play.
My friends and the gnats together
Have gone with the sunny weather.

Beside my bed in winter night,
Old Care as my nurse sits bolt upright ;
She wears a habit that's white enough,
A bonnet black, and takes her snuff.
The box is harshly creaking,
As the woman a pinch is seeking.

I often dream that happy time
Of bliss has return'd, and May's young prime
And friendship, and all the gnats as well,—
When creaks the snuff-box—and, sad to tell,
The bubble is straightway breaking,
While the nurse her snuff is taking.

The fearfully ghastly element of Heine's imagination, and the love of the horrible, re-appear in the poem entitled, "Sie erlischt."

The curtain falls, as ends the play,
And all the audience go away ;
And did the piece give satisfaction ?
Methinks they found it of attraction.
A much-respected public then
Its poet thankfully commended ;
But now the house is hush'd again,
And lights and merriment are ended.

But hark to that dull heavy clang
Hard by the empty stage's middle,
It was perchance the bursting twang
Of the worn string of some old fiddle.
With rustling noise across the pit
Some nasty rats like shadows flit ;
And rancid oil all places smell of.
And the last lamp with groans and sighs,
Despairing, then goes out and dies—
My soul was this poor light I tell of.

Gloomier and gloomier it grew in the poet's sick-room, and often fearful spectres arose before his mind—spectres that might have silenced the voice of any other mortal. But the genius of Heine looked without fear at them and surrounded them with a poetical halo, hiding their terrors behind the veil of rhythm.

His last poems are among the most wonderful productions, that have ever been created by a human mind, and their weird beauty holds us spell-bound, although their subjects are often exceedingly painful.

“Like a dead man, the living poet was nailed into his coffin,” writes Théophile Gautier, “but when we bent listening over him, we heard poetry ringing from under the pall.” Heine himself fully felt the impressions which his last poems would make upon the world, and one day, after having read a few of them to his friend Meissner, he exclaimed: “Is that not beautiful, horribly beautiful? It is like a wail coming from the tomb. You hear the voice of a person, who has been buried alive, crying through the night, or perhaps it is the voice of a corpse, or perhaps the tomb itself.” Such tones German poetry had not

heard before, and could not have heard before, for no poet ever lived in such a condition before.

At about the same time he wrote the "Romanzero," Heine also wrote the libretto for a ballet, entitled "Doctor Faust," and another for a pantomime, bearing the title, "The Goddess Diana." The former of these was sold to Mr. Lumley, the director of Her Majesty's Theatre in London, for the sum of 6,000 francs, but it never appeared upon the English stage. It seems, however, to have formed the basis of the ballet "Satanella," which Taglioni arranged for the Berlin stage a few years ago.

A very important addition to Heine's prose works is an article called "The Gods in Exile," which was written in 1852-1853, and first printed in April, 1853, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. The chief work, however, which occupied the poet before his death, was the writing of his "Memoirs."

At a very early period of his life he had already begun to prepare a MS. of "Memoirs," as the remarkable time in which he lived, and his own peculiar personal experiences, induced him to believe that such a work would be of interest to the world.

Unfortunately, however, Heine, later in life, decided to destroy this MS. of his "Memoirs" almost entirely, for reasons which the reader of this volume will find in the poet's own words in the introduction to the fragment of the "Memoirs," of which this volume contains a translation.

Although the question: "How were the 'Memoirs' found, and why did they remain so long unpublished?" has produced a good deal of controversy in the German press, it is of comparatively little interest to the foreigner, and neither adds to nor detracts from the value of the newly-discovered pages, in which Heine describes what he remembers of his youth. All that is really necessary for a correct understanding of the fragment, is given in the foot notes accompanying the text of the "Memoirs." It was Heine's intention to re-write his "Memoirs," and perhaps he had hoped to complete them; but he was able to finish only a few pages when death cut off his work. The fragment which has come to us was probably begun in 1854; and although the occasional repetitions in it, and the less finished style in which it is written

exhibit traces of the poet's failing health, it still shows his great originality. The wit contained in it is harmless, in comparison with that which pervades Heine's other works; but even in these "Memoirs" the reader will find many passages in which the poet has employed his destructive sarcasm, and one may easily imagine why some of the poet's relatives, who had cause to believe that their character was commented upon in the "Memoirs," were so afraid of seeing the manuscript in question published.

The fact of the "Memoirs" commencing with the words "Dear Madam," may, perhaps, lead the reader to believe that Heine wished to dedicate his work to a lady of his acquaintance; and it is possible that the poet really intended to address some one of his numerous female friends—perhaps Madam Selden, Madam Jaubert, or more probably the Princess Christine Belgiojoso; but it is most probable that the introductory words were addressed to an imaginary person, just as was his book "Le Grand."

A peculiar value is given to the fragment of the "Memoirs" by the circumstance, that it describes that period of the poet's life which hitherto

has been the least known to the public, and during which his character first began to develop; and the attentive reader will find in its interesting pages the germs of many psychological characteristics, the nature of which often puzzles us when reading Heine's works. The voice of truth speaks to us from every line of the "Memoirs," and how much Heine loved the truth can be seen in everything he has written. Even his enemy Boerne was obliged to say: "If ever there was a person whom Nature destined to be a truthful man, it was Heine. He cannot play the hypocrite in twelve lines; he cannot lie even for one day, not for the length of half a sheet. If anyone should offer him a crown, he would not suppress his smile, his sarcasm, his wit."

But let us return to the sick-bed of the poet. The eighth year of his suffering had arrived, and the hour of his dissolution approached. During the previous years of his illness he had employed a secretary, as the condition of his eyes made it impossible for him to write much himself. It was, therefore, a great blow to Heine when in May, 1855, this secretary, Richard Reinhardt, left him; for he could not find any

suitable person to fill Reinhardt's place, and he had, with indescribable pain, to write himself, not only his manuscripts, but also his letters. Finally, towards the end of the year mentioned, he became acquainted with a young lady, who had been sent to him by his friend Alfred Meissner, and who generously offered her services as secretary to the sick poet, of whose works she had been for many years an admirer.

This young lady, to whom Heine gave the pet name of "Mouche," and who recently, under the name of Camille Selden, has published her recollections of Heine, and several letters and poems which the poet had addressed to her, became the angel of pity at the gloomy death-bed in the house No. 3, Avenue Matignon, to which Heine had been removed in 1854, and where he at least could enjoy from his window the view of the green trees and the gardens of the Champs-Élysées.

"Just as the prisoner," says Alfred Meissner in his "Reminiscences of Heinrich Heine," "loves the little bird that is accustomed to sit upon his window-sill, and tenderly feeds it in order to tempt it to return again and to make the

place agreeable to it, so that it may occasionally forget the merry green forest—thus Heine also gave to his friend and faithful companion many little presents, which were full of meaning, and expressed in a hundred different manners his kind feelings towards her, and almost daily, although he was scarcely able to do so, he made an effort to write with his weak hand little notes, in which he begged her imploringly again and again to repeat her visits."

And he did not ask in vain, for the young lady seems to have willingly spent her days with the dying man, consoling him and brightening his last sad hours by her presence. The sympathy which she showed found a beautiful echo in the poet's breast, and once more renewed in him the fervent desire for love. It almost seemed to him that the long-wished for hour had come and that he had finally found a soul which understood him, now when it was too late, and when he had to take leave of this world. New hope filled his heart, and for a short period he seemed to forget that the end was approaching. But he was suddenly reminded that the hour had come. Towards the middle of February,

1856, the poet became suddenly more ill than ever, and he vomited for three days almost without interruption; nevertheless, he retained his full consciousness and not even his sarcastic humor left him. A few hours before his death a friend came rushing into his room, wishing to bid him a last farewell, and in his anxiety put to the sick man the question, how he was standing with God. "Don't trouble yourself," said Heine, smiling: "Dieu me pardonnera, c'est son métier!" Thus arrived the last night, the night of the 16th and the 17th of February. When Dr. Gruby came to see his sick friend, Heine asked him whether he would have to die soon, and the physician replied in the affirmative, as a promise which he had given to the poet bound him not to conceal the truth. Heine listened to the answer with composure and without being in the least moved by it. At four o'clock in the morning of the 17th of February, 1856, the poet had ceased to live. Madam Heine had gone to sleep toward one o'clock; when she awoke, her husband's soul had departed.

The funeral took place on the 20th of February, on a cold, grey, foggy winter's day, at

eleven o'clock in the morning. Only about a hundred persons followed in the procession, most of them Germans; but there were also several of the best-known French writers present. Conspicuous among the mourners, who stood around the grave, were Théophile Gautier, Mignet, Paul de St. Victor, and Alexandre Dumas. The latter wept bitterly.

The coffin, which contained the poor emaciated body of the poet, was very large and extraordinarily heavy, and many of those who followed in the procession were, perhaps, reminded of the poet's words:—

Do you know why the coffin
So heavy and great must be?
Because in it I laid my love,
And with it my misery.

No proud marble monument marks the place where the poet's ashes rest. A simple stone with the inscription, "Henri Heine," indicates to the visitors of the *Cimetière Montmartre*, in Paris, the place where the greatest poet of modern Germany lies buried. But a monument more durable than stone Heine has erected for himself

in his immortal songs, the echoes of which resound in the mountains and valleys of Germany, and will fill the air with melody as long as the German language is spoken.





MEMOIRS

OF THE

YOUTH

OF

HEINRICH HEINE

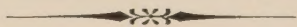




MEMOIRS

OF

HEINRICH HEINE



I HAVE actually tried, dear Madam, to write down as exactly as possible what I remember of my own time, in so far as my person came in contact with it, either as a spectator or as a victim.

Of these notes, to which I have given self-conceitedly the title of "Memoirs," I have been obliged, however, to destroy almost one-half, partly on account of petty family considerations, partly also on account of religious scruples.

I have since tried to fill up as well as I could the void occurring from this, but I fear that posthumous duties will force me before my death to submit my memoirs to another *auto-da-fé*, and

what then shall be spared from the flames will perhaps never see daylight.

I shall be careful about naming the friends to whom I entrust the keeping of my manuscript, and the execution of my last will in regard to it ; I shall not expose them after my death to the importunities of an idle public, and thereby make them liable to become untrue to their mandate.

Such a breach of trust I have never been able to excuse ; it is an unpardonable and immoral act to publish even one line of an author which he himself has not intended for the public at large. This refers especially to letters which are addressed to private persons. He who gets such printed or published commits a despicable act of felony.

After these confessions, dear Madam, you will easily perceive that I cannot grant you, as you desire, the reading of my memoirs and my correspondence.

As a courtier of your Amiability, however, as I have always been, I cannot absolutely refuse your request ; and in order to show you my good will, I shall in another manner try to satisfy the sweet curiosity which is the consequence of a loving sympathy with my fate.

With this intention I have written the following pages, and you will find in rich abundance those biographical notes which may be interesting to you. All that is important and characteristic is honestly communicated here, and the combined effect of exterior events and of occurrences in the inner life of my soul will reveal to you the stamp of my being and myself. The veil has fallen from my soul, and thou mayest look at it in its beautiful nakedness. There are no blemishes, only wounds. And, alas! wounds made not by the hands of enemies but by those of friends.

The night is silent. Outside only the rain beats upon the roof, and mournfully moans the autumn wind.

The cheerless sick-room at this moment is almost luxuriously home-like, and I sit without pain in the large arm-chair.

All at once, without the handle of the door moving, thy beautiful image enters, and thou liest down upon the cushion at my feet. Rest thy beautiful head on my knees and, without looking up, listen.

I will tell thee the tale of my life.

If occasionally heavy drops should fall upon

thy locks, do not be disturbed ; it is not the rain that leaks through the roof. Do not cry, but silently press my hand.*

*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
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*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

What a sublime feeling must stir the heart of such a Prince of the Church when he surveys the crowded market-place, where thousands with uncovered heads are kneeling before him expecting his blessing.

In a book of Italian travel, by Hofrath

* The text of the "Memoirs" is interrupted here on account of the fact that Heine's brother, Maximilian, one day, when visiting Heinrich Heine's widow, burned pages 6—31 of the manuscript which Madam Heine unfortunately had permitted him to look at. The reason for this act of barbarism was evidently the desire to destroy a passage referring to the humble origin of the Heine family, regarding which almost all the members, except the poet himself, were sensitive.

Heine probably spoke, in the pages which have been destroyed, of the intention of his mother to make him a Catholic priest, a fact to which he also alludes elsewhere ; and then he perhaps described, in his humoristic poetical manner, the advantages and attractions offered by a high position amongst the clergy.

Moritz, I once read a description of such a scene in which there happened an incident that I just now recall.

Amongst the country people, as Moritz relates, whom he saw kneeling down, a bead-seller of the mountains especially attracted his attention, one of those men who carve the prettiest rosaries out of a certain kind of brown wood, and who sell them all over the Romagna at a higher rate because they manage to procure for them the consecration of the Pope.

The man was kneeling there in the deepest devotion, but he held up the broad-brimmed felt hat in which he had his merchandise, the rosaries, and while the Pope, with outstretched hands, pronounced his blessing, the man shook his hat and stirred its contents, just as the chestnut sellers do when they roast their chestnuts upon the grate. He seemed conscientiously to take care that the rosaries which were lying on the bottom should get also something of the Papal benediction, that they might all be equally consecrated.

I could not help mentioning here this touching trait of pious *naïveté*, and I take up again the thread of my confessions, all of which refer

to the spiritual process through which I had to pass later on.

In the earliest commencements, the latest events find their explanation.

It is certainly remarkable that as early as my 13th year, I was made acquainted with all the systems of "Free-thinking," by a venerable clergyman, who did not in the least neglect the sacerdotal duties of his office, thus enabling me to learn, while still young, how religion and doubt may walk side by side without hypocrisy, the result of which was, for me, not only infidelity, but the most tolerant indifference.

Time and place are also important considerations. I was born at the end of the sceptical 18th century, in a city where, during my childhood, not only the French, but also the French intellect was reigning.

The Frenchmen whose acquaintance I made gave me, I must confess, books which were rather unclean, and created in me a prejudice against the whole French literature.

I therefore never liked it afterwards as much as it deserves.

But I remained the most unjust as regards

French poetry, which from my youth was disagreeable to me. The first cause of this was, perhaps, that confounded Abbé Daunoi, who taught French at the Lyceum of Düsseldorf, and who absolutely wanted to force me to make French verses. It needed but little more, and not only French poetry, but all poetry, would have been completely spoiled for me.

The Abbé Daunoi, an exiled priest, was a little old man, with very elastic features, and a brown wig, which, whenever he became angry, was sure to get awry.

He had written for his different classes several French grammars as well as some "Chrestomathies," in which there were extracts from German and French classics for translation; for the highest class, he had also published a kind of "Art oratoire" and an "Art poétique," two little books, of which the former contained receipts for eloquence from Quintilian, that were applied to examples taken from the sermons of Fléchier, Massillon, Bourdaloue, and Bossuet, and which were not altogether tedious to me.

But, when I think of the other book that contained the definitions of poetry: "L'art de

peindre par les images" — the flat trash of the school of Batteux — and also of French prosody, and the meter of the French in general, what a fearful nightmare!

I know nothing more absurd than the metrical system of French poetry, that "Art de peindre par les images," as the French definition of it is, which distorted conception is, perhaps, one of the reasons of their continual aberration into pictorial paraphrase.

Their meter must surely have been invented by Procrustes; it is a perfect strait-jacket for thoughts, which, considering their tameness, surely do not need it. That the beauty of a poem consists in overcoming metrical difficulties, is another ridiculous maxim which is of like origin. The French hexameter, that belching in rhymes, is a real horror to me. The French have, themselves, always felt this disgusting deformity, which is more sinful than all the crimes of Sodom and Gomorrah, and their good actors are taught to speak the verses "saccadé" as if they were prose; but why, then, the superfluous trouble of versification?

Thus I think at present, and thus I felt even as a boy, and you may easily imagine that an

open war broke out between me and the old Brown Wig, when I declared to him that it was perfectly impossible for me to make French verses. He announced that I had not the least talent for poetry, and called me a barbarian of the Teutoburg Forest.

I still think with horror of the time when I had to translate out of the "Chrestomathie" of the professor, the address of Caiaphas to the Sanhedrin from the hexameters of Klopstock's "Messiah" into French alexandrines! It was a studied cruelty. God pardon me! I cursed the world, and the foreign oppressors who wanted to impose their versification upon us, and I could almost have become a Frenchman-eater.

I might have been willing to die for France, but to make French verses — never!

The difficulty was settled by the rector and my mother. The latter was in fact not satisfied that I should learn to make verses, even if they were only French ones. She at that time had the greatest fear that I might become a poet; that would be the worst, she used to say, that could happen to me.

The ideas which were then associated with the

word *poet* were not very honorable ones, and the poet was regarded as a poor, ragged devil who, for a few thalers, made rhymes on certain occasions, and finally died in a hospital.

Within ourselves are the stars of our fortune.

But my mother had very high-flown ideas with regard to me, and all her educational plans had reference to them. She played the chief part in the history of my development ; she made the programme of all my studies ; and even before my birth began her plans for my education. I followed obediently her outspoken wishes ; but I must acknowledge that it was her fault that all my trials and efforts in ordinary pursuits turned out fruitless, for they never responded to my nature.

At first it was the splendor of the Empire which dazzled my mother ; and when the daughter of a hardware merchant who lived in our part of the country, with whom she was very intimate, had become a Duchess, and had announced to her that her husband had won many battles and would soon advance to the position of a king—ah, then my mother dreamt of seeing me in the most gilded epaulets, or the most embroidered uniform

of a courtier of the Emperor, to whose service she wanted to dedicate me entirely.

In consequence of this, I had now to study chiefly those things which are useful to such a course of life, and although there had been already sufficient provision made in the Lyceum for mathematical studies, and I had been abundantly stuffed by the amiable Professor Brewer with geometry, statics, hydrostatics, hydraulics, etc., and although I was swimming in logarithms and algebra, nevertheless, I had still to take private lessons in these branches of learning, which were to enable me to become a strategist, or, if necessary, the administrator of conquered provinces.

With the fall of the Empire my mother had also to renounce the splendid career for me of which she had dreamt; the studies necessary to it came to an end, and, curiously enough, they left no traces in my mind, so foreign were they to it. It had been a mechanical acquirement which I threw off as useless rubbish.

My mother now began to dream of a splendid future for me in another direction.

The firm Rothschild, with the head of which my father was on intimate terms, had already

commenced its fabulous epoch of success ; other princes of finance and of industry had likewise arisen in our neighbourhood, and my mother maintained that the time had now come when a clever head could do the most wonderful things in the mercantile branches, and could rise to the highest position. She consequently decided that I should become a financial power, and now I had to study foreign languages—especially English, geography, book-keeping ; in short, all the sciences referring to commerce by land or sea, and to industry.

In order to become acquainted with the business of the Exchange and with the colonial products, I had later to enter the counting-house of one of my father's bankers and the warehouse of a wholesale grocer ; in the former my instruction lasted at the most three weeks, in the latter four weeks, but I had thus an opportunity of learning how one writes a promissory note, and how a nutmeg looks.

A renowned merchant in whose office I was to become an *apprenti millionnaire*, was of the opinion that I had no talent for gain, and I laughingly acknowledged to him that he might be correct.

When, soon afterwards, a great financial crisis

arrived, and my father, as many of our friends, lost his fortune, the mercantile soap-bubble burst more quickly and more pitifully than the imperial one, and my mother had now to dream of some other career for me.

This time, she was of the opinion that I would absolutely have to study law. She had remarked that in England long ago, and also in France, and in Constitutional Germany, the profession of law was all-powerful, and that the lawyers especially, on account of their habit of speaking in public, played the chief parts, *i.e.*, the talking parts, and thus rose to the highest offices of state.

As the new University of Bonn had just been founded, where the chairs of the legal faculty were occupied by the most renowned professors, my mother sent me immediately to Bonn, where I was soon sitting at the feet of Mackeldey and Welker, sipping the manna of their science.

Of the seven years that I spent in German universities, I wasted three beautiful flourishing years of life in the study of the Roman jurists.

What a horrible book is that "Corpus Juris," the Bible of Egotism!

Just as the Romans themselves have always

been hateful to me, so has been their Code of Laws. These robbers wanted to secure their spoils, and what they had gained by the sword they tried to protect by law; therefore the Roman was at the same time a soldier and a lawyer. Indeed, to those Roman thieves we are indebted for the high-praised Roman Law, which stands in the most flagrant contradiction to Religion, Morals, Humanity, and Reason.

I brought those studies to an end, but I could never make up my mind to utilize such acquirements; and it was, perhaps, because I also felt that others would easily excel me in advocates' tricks and pettifogging, that I hung up my doctor's cap on a nail.

My mother made a still more sober face than usual. But I had now grown to manhood, and had reached the age when one must give over motherly protection.

The good woman had also grown older, and after so many *fiascos* in her administration of my life, she repented, as we have seen above,* that she had not dedicated me to a religious calling.

* Heine refers evidently to a passage contained in the pages which were destroyed by his brother Maximilian.

She is now a matron of eighty-seven years*—and her mind has not suffered from her age. She has never pretended to direct my manner of thinking, and she has always been tenderness and love itself to me.

Her belief was a severe Deism, which was well adapted to the prevailing drift of her reasoning. She was a disciple of Rousseau, had read his "Emile," nursed her children herself, and the science of education was her hobby. She herself had enjoyed a scientific education and had shared the studies of a brother, who became an excellent physician, but who died early. When yet a young girl she was obliged to read Latin dissertations and other learned publications aloud to her father, and often astonished the old man by her questions.

* This remark is either the consequence of a slip of the pen or of a misconception in regard to the real age of his mother; for Heine's mother, Betty Heine, was born on the 27th of November, 1771; she therefore was not 87 years of age until 1858, while Heine died in 1856. The long absence from his mother's house—he had been in Hamburg for the last time in 1844—explains his ignorance in regard to the actual age of his mother. She died in 1859, three years after the death of her renowned son.

Her reason and her sentiment were thoroughly healthy, and it was not from her that I inherited fanciful and romantic inclinations. As I have mentioned already, she had a perfect dread of poetry, took from me any romance that she might find in my hands, did not permit me to visit the theatre, forbade me to take part in popular amusements, watched over my acquaintances, scolded the maid-servants when they told ghost stories in my presence—in short, she did everything to guard me against superstition and poetical fancies.

She was penurious, but only as regarded her own person; in order to give pleasure to others she could be even extravagant, and as she only valued money and did not love it, she gave it with open hand and often astonished me by her charity and liberality.

How great was her self-sacrifice toward her son, whom, under trying circumstances, she furnished not only with the programme, but also with the means for his studies! When I went to the University, my father's business was in a very sad condition, and my mother sold her jewelry, necklace, and earrings of considerable

value, in order to secure for me a living during the first four years of my University studies.

I was, however, not the first one of our family who, in the University, ate gems and swallowed pearls. The father of my mother, as she herself told me, had tried the same experiment. The jewels, which ornamented the prayer-book of his deceased mother, had served to defray his expenses during his sojourn at the University, when his father, old Lazarus de Geldern, on account of a lawsuit with a married sister regarding a question of entailment, was reduced to great poverty — he who had inherited from his father a fortune about which an old great-aunt of mine used to relate to me wonders.

It always sounded to the boy like a tale of the "Thousand and One Nights" when the old woman told of the great palaces, and the Persian carpets, and the massive gold and silver vessels which the good man, who enjoyed great honors at the court of the Prince Elector* and his consort, had so pitifully lost.

A story which may answer as a "pendant" to

* Carl Theodor, Prince Elector of the Palatinate, founder of the Academy of Painting at Düsseldorf.

the above shall be interwoven here with my narrative, because it may serve to rehabilitate in public opinion the calumniated mother of one of my colleagues. I once read in a biography of poor Dietrich Grabbe,* that the vice of drunkenness, in consequence of which he afterwards perished, had been early implanted in his nature by his own mother, for she had given brandy to the boy, nay, even to the baby, to drink. This accusation, which the editor of the biography heard from malevolent relatives, seems to me to be altogether unjust, when I recall that the deceased Grabbe often mentioned that his mother warned him with very emphatic words against drinking.

She was a rough kind of a woman, the wife of a gaoler, and occasionally, when she caressed her young Wolf-Dietrich, it may have happened that, with her wolf paws, she scratched him a little. But she possessed the genuine heart of a mother, and proved this at the time when she sent her son to Berlin to study there.

On parting, as Grabbe told me, she pressed a package into his hands, in which, softly enveloped in cotton, were half-a-dozen silver spoons, to-

* A German dramatist of considerable talent.

gether with six smaller teaspoons and also a great soup-ladle — a proud domestic treasure, which the women of the poorer classes give up only with a bleeding heart, it being, so to say, a silver decoration, by which they believe themselves to be distinguished from the ordinary tin-mob. When I made Grabbe's acquaintance he had already eaten up the soup ladle, the Goliath as he called it. To my occasional questions how he was doing, he answered laconically and with clouded brow: "I am just at my third spoon," or "I am at my fourth spoon." "The large ones are disappearing," he one day sighed, "and there will be small bites only when the little ones, the teaspoons, shall have their turn; and when they are gone, there will be no bites at all."

Unfortunately he was right, and the less he had to eat the more he indulged in drinking, and he became a drunkard. At first misery and afterwards domestic troubles induced the unlucky man to seek for recreation and oblivion in intoxication, and finally he perhaps reached for the bottle, as others do for a pistol, *viz.*, in order to put an end to his wretched existence. "Believe

me," once said to me a naïve Westphalian, a countryman of Grabbe, "that man could stand a good deal and would not have died from drinking, but he drank because he wished to die; he committed suicide by drinking."

A rehabilitation of the honor of a mother, such as I have given above, is surely never in the wrong place. I have hitherto neglected publishing it, as I wished to make it part of a sketch on the character of Grabbe;* this sketch has never been written by me, and in my book, "*De l'Allemagne*," I could mention Grabbe only briefly.

The above is addressed to the German rather than to the French reader; for the benefit of the latter I will briefly mention that the said Dietrich Grabbe was one of the greatest German poets, and amongst all our dramatic authors, he may be said to have been the one who had most similarity to Shakespeare. He may have had fewer strings upon his lyre than others, who, in

* According to a written communication addressed to August Lewald, Heine had commenced this sketch in 1837. In it he says: "I have already begun to write upon Grabbe, but I will not continue until I have read Duller's biography of the unfortunate man."

this regard, perhaps excelled him ; but the strings he did possess had a ring which is only to be found in the works of the eminent Briton. He has the same suddenness, the same sounds of Nature with which Shakespeare terrifies, moves, and delights us.

His good qualities, however, are eclipsed by a want of taste, a cynicism and an extravagance which surpass the craziest and most horrid thoughts ever produced by a human brain. But it is not sickness, fever, or mental aberration, for instance, which is the cause of this ; it is only a mental intoxication of genius. As Plato very aptly called Diogenes a mad Socrates, thus one might call Grabbe, unfortunately more aptly still, a drunken Shakespeare.

In his printed dramas these monstrosities are very much modified ; they were, however, horribly conspicuous in the manuscript of his "Gothland," a tragedy which, at a time when we were still entire strangers, he once handed to me, or rather threw at my feet with the words : "I once wished to know what there was in me, and I therefore gave this manuscript to Professor Gubitz, who shook his head over it, and, in order to get rid of me, referred

me to you, who, as he said, had just as crazy caprices in his head as I, and therefore would understand me much better—there, now you have the rubbish ! ”

After saying this, without waiting for a reply, the queer fellow stalked off, and as I was just going to see Madam von Varnhagen, I took the manuscript with me, in order to let her enjoy the *primeur* of a poet ; for, from the few passages that I read, I saw that I had the work of a poet before me.

One recognizes the poetical game even by its odor. But the odor was this time too strong for female nerves, and late in the evening, although midnight was already approaching, Madam von Varnhagen sent for me, and asked me for God's sake, to take the terrible manuscript back again, as she would be unable to sleep as long as it remained in her house. Such was the impression made by Grabbe's productions in their original form.

The above digression will find its justification in the subject itself. The rehabilitation of the honor of a mother is always in place, and the sympathetic reader will not consider the remarks

of Grabbe which I have mentioned here in regard to the poor calumniated woman,* as wholly disconnected with the subject.

Now, however, after having discharged an obligation of piety towards an unfortunate poet, I will return to my own mother and her relatives, continuing with my remarks upon the influence which she and her family exercised upon my mental development.

Next to my mother, it was her brother, my uncle Simon de Geldern, who especially occupied himself with my education. . He has been dead for twenty years. He was a peculiar man, of unimposing—nay, of an odd appearance; a small, good-looking figure, with a pale, severe face, and a nose straight as a Greek nose, but surely longer by a third than those noses which were worn by the Greeks.

It was said that during his youth his nose had been of normal proportions, and that it only had attained such a remarkable length from the bad habit of continually pulling it. When we children asked our uncle if this was true, he

* Repetition showing that Heine's mental powers were already decreasing somewhat when he wrote these Memoirs.

very emphatically reprimanded us for our disrespectful speech, and then he again pulled his nose.

He was always dressed in an old-fashioned manner, wore short breeches, white silk stockings, buckles on his shoes, and according to the old custom a pigtail of considerable length, which, when the little man was tripping through the streets, flew from one shoulder to the other, cut all kinds of capers, and seemed to mock his master behind his back.

Often, when my good uncle was sitting absorbed in thought or reading his paper, the wicked desire seized me to take hold of his little pigtail and to pull it as if it were a bell-rope. This exasperated my uncle very much, and he began wringing his hands over the young generation, which had no longer respect for anything, which could be kept in bounds neither by divine nor human authority, and which would finally lay its hands even upon the holiest.

But although the exterior of the man was not made to command respect, his interior, his heart, was the more estimable, and it was the most honest and the most noble heart that I have

met with on this earth. There was an honesty in the man which reminded one of the rigor in matters of honor described in the old Spanish dramas, and as regards his fidelity he recalled also their heroes. He never had an occasion to become the "Physician of his own honor," but he had always been a "Steadfast Prince"* in all knightly grandeur, although he never declaimed four-footed trochaics, nor in the least lingered for the palms of death, and although he wore, instead of the brilliant cloak of a knight, a threadbare little swallow-tail coat.

He was not by any means an ascetic enemy of worldly enjoyment; he liked country fairs, and also that room in Mr. Rasia's tavern which was reserved for the friends of wine, and where he liked to eat fieldfares with juniper berries; but all the fieldfares of this world and all the pleasures of life he would willingly forego with proud firmness, whenever there was a principle to be defended which he had recognized to be true and good.

From a wordly point of view his life had been a failure. Simon de Geldern had gone through

* Titles of Spanish dramas.

a course of so-called "humanistic studies," or "humaniora," in a Jesuit college; but when the death of his parents left him free to choose any calling whatever, he chose none, gave up the idea of preparing for professional study at one of the foreign Universities, and remained at home in Düsseldorf, in the "Ark of Noah," as the little house was named, which his father had left him, and over the door of which could be seen a representation of the "Ark of Noah," nicely carved and painted in bright colors.

With unwavering diligence he abandoned himself to all his learned hobbies and queer fancies, to his bibliomania, and especially to his rage for writing, to which he gave vent chiefly in political journals and obscure periodicals.

By the way, not only writing but thinking also was an extremely difficult task for him.

Was his love for authorship, therefore, only a consequence of the desire to do something useful for the world? He took part in all the leading questions of the day, and the reading of newspapers and pamphlets had become with him a madness; the neighbors called him the "Doctor;" not that he was himself very learned, but because

his father and his brother had been Doctors of Medicine.

The old women could not be persuaded that the son of the old physician, who had cured them so often, had not also inherited the remedies of his father, and when they fell sick they came running to him * * * *

* * * * *

* * * requesting him to tell them what was the matter. When my poor uncle happened to be thus interrupted in his studies, he would grow very angry, and send the old shrews away wishing them at the devil.

It was this uncle who had a great influence upon my mental development, and to whom I owe infinitely much in this respect. However different our views, and however poor his literary efforts may have been, the latter may nevertheless have awakened in me the desire of making some trials in literature.

My uncle wrote a stiff court style, such as is taught in the Jesuit colleges, where Latin is considered the chief thing; he never learned to like my manner of expressing myself, which seemed to him too easy, too trifling, too irreverent. But

his zeal in furnishing me with the means for mental progress was to me extremely useful.

He made a present to me, while I was still a boy, of the most beautiful and most precious books; he placed at my disposal his own library which was very rich in classic works and also in pamphlets on the leading questions of the day, and he even permitted me to rummage in the garret of the "Ark of Noah" amongst the boxes, in which the old books and manuscripts of my deceased grandfather were to be found.

With what mysterious delight throbbed the heart of the boy, when he could spend entire days in that garret, which in reality might have been called a large attic.

It was not exactly an attractive abode, the only creature living there being a fat Angora cat that was not especially given to cleanliness, and that only rarely, with her tail, wiped the dust and the cobwebs partially away from the old rubbish that was stored there.

But my heart was still in the bloom of youth, and the sun shone so merrily through the little dormer-window, that everything appeared to me in a fantastic light, and the old cat herself seemed

to me like a bewitched princess, who might perhaps suddenly be set free from her animal shape, and show herself in her former beauty and splendor, while at the same time the garret might be changed into a magnificent palace, just as it happens in all the fairy-tales.

But the good old fairy times are over ; cats remain cats ; and the garret of the "Ark of Noah" remained a dusty lumber-room, a hospital for incurable household articles, a Salpêtrière* for old furniture that had reached the last degree of decrepitude, while at the same time a sentimental attachment and regard for the pious remembrances which were associated with it prevented one from throwing it out of doors.

There stood a dilapidated old cradle, in which once my mother had been rocked ; the gala wig of my grandfather, which was perfectly rotten, and seemed to have become childish from age, was now lying in it.

The rusty gala sword of my grandfather, a pair of fire-tongs, of which only one arm was left, and other invalid ironware were hanging on the wall. Near them, upon a shaky board, was stand-

* Name of a hospital in Paris.

ing the stuffed parrot of my grandmother, now without feathers and no longer green but ash-gray, and which, with the single glass-eye that remained to him, had a very ghastly look.

A great green pug-dog of porcelain also stood there; it was hollow inside, the back part was partially broken off, and the cat seemed to have a great respect for this Chinese or Japanese work of art; she made before it all kinds of devout contortions, taking it perhaps for a divine being—cats are so superstitious.

In one corner an old flute was lying that had once belonged to my mother, who used to play upon it when she was a young girl; and it was this very attic which she had chosen for her concert hall, either not to disturb the old gentleman, her father, with her music, or to prevent him from getting cross on account of the time which his daughter lost over her sentimental amusement. The cat had now chosen this flute for her favorite toy, drawing it, by the faded pink ribbon which was attached to it, hither and thither upon the floor.

Amongst the antiquities of the attic there were also globes, very curious pictures of planets,

still and retorts, recalling astronomical and alchemistic studies.

In the boxes, among the books of my grandfather, there were also many treatises referring to the secret sciences. Most of these books, however, were old, worthless works on medicine. There was no lack of works on philosophy ; but, side by side with the thoroughly reasonable Cartesius, were to be found fantastic authors like Paracelsus, van Helmont — nay, even Agrippa von Nettesheim, whose “*Philosophia Occulta*” I saw there for the first time.

Even the boy was amused by the dedicatory epistle to the Abbot Trithem, that was accompanied by the answer in which this *compère* pays back, with interest, the bombastic compliments of the other charlatan.

The best and most valuable thing, however, that I found in the dusty boxes, was a note-book containing notes in the hand-writing of one of the brothers of my grandfather, who was called the “Chevalier,” or the “Oriental,” and about whom my old aunts always had much to say and to relate.

This great-uncle, who was also named Simon

de Geldern, must have been a queer saint. The cognomen of the "Oriental" was given to him because he had undertaken long journeys in oriental countries, and because after his return he always wore oriental costumes.

The most of his time he seems to have spent in the maritime cities of the north of Africa, and especially in the states belonging to Morocco, where from a Portuguese he learned the trade of an armorer, which he carried on with success.

He made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and upon Mount Moriah he had a vision during an ecstasy of prayer. What did he see? He never revealed it.

An independent tribe of Bedouins, that did not profess Islamism but a kind of Mosaism, and which had their resting place, so to say, in one of the unknown oases of the north African desert, chose him for their leader or sheik. This warlike little nation lived in continual feuds with all the neighboring tribes, and was the terror of the caravans. To speak in plain terms, my deceased great uncle, the pious visionary of the holy Mount Moriah, became the captain of a band of robbers in Africa. In that

beautiful country he also acquired his knowledge of horse-breeding, and those equestrian accomplishments on account of which, after his return to Europe, he was so much admired.

At the different courts, where he stopped for a long period, he was conspicuous by his personal beauty and imposing appearance, and also by the splendor of his oriental dress, which, especially upon the women, exercised a magic influence. Perhaps the greatest impression was that which he made with his pretended secret knowledge, and nobody dared to depreciate the mighty necromancer to his high patrons. The spirits of intrigue were afraid of the spirits of the Cabala.

Naught but his own recklessness was able to ruin him, and my old aunts used to shake their little gray heads in a peculiarly mysterious manner, when they were speaking in whispers about the gallant relations which the "Oriental" held with a very high-born lady, and the discovery of which forced him to leave in great haste the court and the country. Only by taking to flight and leaving behind him all his possessions, was he able to avoid certain death, and to his tried horsemanship he owed his safety.

After this adventure he seems to have found in England a secure but rather poor place of refuge. I draw this conclusion from a pamphlet of my great-uncle, which was printed in London, and which I once by accident discovered when I had climbed up to the highest book-shelves of the Düsseldorf library. It was an oratorio in French verse, entitled "Moses upon Mount Horeb," and referring perhaps to the above-mentioned vision. The preface, however, was written in English, and dated from London ; the verses, like all French verses, were mere lukewarm water in rhymes ; but, in the English prose of the preface, the ill-humor of a proud man who is placed in a condition of want could be recognized.

From the note-book of my great-uncle I could not obtain much reliable information ; it was mostly written, perhaps out of precaution, in Arabic, Syriac and Coptic characters, intermingled curiously enough with French quotations — for instance, there often occurred the verse : —

" Où l'innocence pèrit c'est un crime de vivre."

I also was struck by many other remarks, written likewise in the French language. This

seems to have been the language usually employed by the writer.

An enigma difficult to comprehend was this great-uncle of mine. He led one of those odd existences which were only possible at the commencement and during the middle of the eighteenth century. He was on the one side somewhat of a dreamer, who made a propaganda for cosmopolitan and Utopian ideas for the benefit of the world; and, on the other side, one of those adventurers who, confiding in their individual superiority, either break down the rotten boundaries of a rotten society or else disregard them. At any rate, he was a genuine man.

His charlatanry, which we do not wish to deny, was not of a common kind. He was not one of those ordinary charlatans who pull the teeth of peasants at fairs, but he courageously entered the palaces of the great, for whom he pulled the strongest molars, just as of yore Knight Huon of Bordeaux did for the Sultan of Babylon. Advertising is necessary for business; and life is a business like any other.

And what remarkable man is not somewhat of a charlatan? The charlatans of modesty with

their conceitedness, under the form of meekness, are the worst ones.

The end sanctifies the means. Even the Lord himself, when from Mount Sinai he promulgated his law, did not disdain on that occasion to produce a sufficient quantity of lightning and thunder, although the law itself was so excellent, so divinely good, that it justly might have remained without any addition of burning colophony and thundering kettle-drum music. But the Lord knew his public, which with its oxen and sheep and open mouths, stood at the foot of the mountain, and which he could inspire with greater admiration by some physical trick than by all the miracles of the eternal thought.

However that may be, my great-uncle occupied the imagination of the boy to an extraordinary degree. All that was told about him made an ineffaceable impression upon my young mind, and I entered so deeply into his wanderings and fortunes, that often, in clear daylight, an uncomfortable feeling seized me, and it seemed to me as if I were myself the deceased great-uncle who had died long ago, and that my life was only the continuation of his.

During the night it was reproduced retrospectively in my dreams. My life resembled at that time a great journal, the upper part of which has the contemporary events, the day with its daily news and the debates on daily questions, while in the lower part the poetical past is fantastically revealed in a series of night dreams resembling the *feuilletons* of a romance.

In these dreams I identified myself entirely with my great-uncle, and at the same time it horrified me that I was, so to say, somebody else, and belonged to another period. There were localities which I had never seen before; there were situations of which hitherto I had had no idea, and nevertheless I moved in them not only without hesitation but with ease.

There I met persons clad in brightly-colored and singular costumes, with peculiarly wild physiognomies, whose hands, nevertheless, I pressed like those of old acquaintances; I not only understood their strange language, which I had never heard before, but I answered them even in the same language, gesticulating at the same time with a vivacity to which I was unaccustomed, and, still more, saying things which

disagreeably jarred with my ordinary manner of thinking.

This curious condition lasted about a year, and although I regained the unity of my self-consciousness, there nevertheless remained some faint traces of that state of mind in my soul. Many an idiosyncrasy, many fatal sympathies and antipathies which are foreign to my nature, even actions which are contradictory to my way of thinking, I take to be the after-effect of the time when I was my own great-uncle.

When I commit mistakes, the origin of which seems incomprehensible to me, I like to put them to the account of my oriental double. My father, to whom I once proposed such an hypothesis as an excuse for a little oversight, jestingly remarked that he hoped my great-uncle had signed no checks that might some day be presented to me for payment.

No such oriental checks have been shown to me; besides, I have had sufficient trouble with my own occidental checks.

There are, however, worse debts than money debts. Each generation is a continuation of another generation, and is responsible for its acts.

The Holy Writ says: The fathers have eaten green grapes and their grand-children's teeth are set on edge in consequence of it.

There exists a common responsibility among the generations which succeed each other; even nations, which one after the other enter into the arena, take upon themselves such a joint responsibility, and the whole of humanity will liquidate finally the great inherited debt of the past. In the valley of Jehoshaphat the big account book will be destroyed, or perhaps even before that time a general bankruptcy will take place.

The lawgiver of the Jews thoroughly understood this common responsibility, and gave a special sanction to it in his law of inheritance; for him there probably existed no continuation of individual life after death, and he believed only in the immortality of the family; all goods were family property, and nobody was able to alienate them so completely that they should not return after a certain period to the members of the family.*

* Compare with this the following extract of the "Confessions of Heinrich Heine": "Moses strove towards the moralization of property, he sought to bring it into

In striking contrast with this humane idea of the Mosaic law is the Roman legislation, which also in its laws of inheritance shows the egotism of the Roman character.

I will not enter at this time upon an investigation of this question, but returning to my personal confessions, I will utilize the opportunity, which is there offered to me, to show by an example how upon the most innocent acts my enemies have based the most malicious insinuations.

harmony with equity, with morality, with the true law of reason, and this he effected by establishing the 'Year of Jubilee,' when every alienated heritage (which amongst an agricultural people always consists of land) was restored into the possession of its original proprietor, no matter by what means it had passed into alien hands. This institution forms a most striking contrast with the 'prescription' of the Romans, according to which after a lapse of a certain period, the actual possessor of a property could not be compelled to restore it to its legitimate owner, so long as the latter was unable to show that he, during that period, had demanded restitution in due form. This last condition left ample scope for chicanery, particularly in a State in which Despotism and Jurisprudence flourished, and where an unlawful possessor had at his disposition every means of intimidation, especially against the poor who could not afford the means for a law-suit."

They pretend to have discovered that, in my biographical notes, I speak very much about the relatives of my mother, while I say nothing at all about my father's kith and kin,* declaring this silence and praise to be intentional on my part, and accusing me of having the same concealed motive of which my deceased colleague, Wolfgang Goethe, was suspected.

It is indeed true that in his "Memoirs" he very often speaks with great satisfaction of his grandfather on his father's side, who, as his worship the mayor, presided in the City Council at the "Roemer" of Frankfort, while not a syllable is said of his grandfather on his mother's side, who, in Bockenheim street, as an honest jobbing tailor, sat with crossed legs upon the table, mending the old trousers of the Republic.

It is not my business, however, to defend Goethe for ignoring this fact; but as regards myself, I wish to put an end to these malicious

* The expression used in the German original is "Sippen und Magen." This expression occurs several times in Heine's writings, and he always uses it in a manner which shows that he meant to indicate by it a certain contempt for his relatives.

interpretations and insinuations—which have furnished material that has been used against me—by declaring that it is not my fault if I have never spoken in my writings of my grandfather on my father's side. The reason is a very simple one—I never knew much of him to speak about. My deceased father had come to Düsseldorf, my native place, as a perfect stranger, and had no relations there—none of those old aunts and cousins who are the female bards that daily recite to the young folks the old family legends with epic monotony, squeaking through the nose, as a substitute for the bagpipe accompaniment customary amongst the Scots.

It was only in regard to the great heroes of my mother's clan that my young mind received early impressions from that quarter, and attentively I listened when old "Bräunle" or Brunhildis told her stories about them.

My father was a very taciturn man, who disliked talking; and once, when, as a little boy—at the time I used to spend my work-days in the gloomy school of the Franciscan monastery, while on Sundays I remained at home—I happened to ask my father who my grand-

father was, he answered half-laughingly and half-crossly: "Your grandfather was a little Jew with a big beard."*

The next day, when I entered the school-room where my little comrades had already assembled, I hastened to tell them the important news, that my grandfather was a little Jew with a big beard.

Scarcely had I made this communication when it went from mouth to mouth, was repeated in all tones, and accompanied by imitations of the voices of animals. The little fellows jumped upon tables and benches, tore from the walls the blackboards, which, together with the inkstands, tumbled down upon the floor; and at the same time they kept laughing, bleating, grunting, barking, crowing — making an infernal noise, with the ever-repeated refrain that my grandfather was a little Jew and had a big beard.

The teacher of our class heard the hubbub, and entered the hall, his face red with anger, and asked immediately who had been the cause of the misdemeanor. As it always happens in such cases, everyone tried meekly to exculpate

* The name of this grandfather was Heymann Heine.

himself, and at the end of the investigation, I, poor fellow, turned out to be the person who by his communication in regard to his grandfather had originated the whole mischief, and I had to pay for it by being soundly whipped.

It was the first whipping which I ever received upon this earth, and on that occasion, for the first time, I made the philosophical observation that our Lord, who ordained the whipping, by his kind providence had also made the arrangement that the person who administers it finally gets tired, as otherwise the punishment might become unendurable.

The stick with which I was whipped was of a yellowish color, but the stripes which it produced upon my back were deep blue. I have never forgotten them.

The name of the teacher who so cruelly beat me has also been remembered by me—it was Father Dickerscheit; he was soon removed from the school for reasons which I have not forgotten either, but which I will not mention.

The Liberals have so often unjustly slandered the clergy that at present one ought to be a little indulgent towards them when an unworthy

member commits a crime, which after all is only the outgrowth of the natural, or rather of the unnatural inclinations of man.

Just as the man who whipped me, so also the reason for the whipping never escaped from my memory, viz., that unlucky genealogical communication; and the after-effect of those early impressions of my youth was so great, that whenever little Jews with big beards were mentioned, I felt an uncomfortable recollection running down my back like a shudder. 'A burnt kitten is afraid of a hot kettle,' says the proverb, and it is easy to comprehend that since that time I have never felt very much inclined to find out something more positive in regard to that redoubtable grandfather and his pedigree, or to communicate it to the great public, as I did formerly to the little public.

Nevertheless I shall not be silent in regard to my grandmother* on my father's side, although of her also I know but little. She was an extraordinarily beautiful woman, the only daughter of a Hamburg banker, who was known everywhere on account of his wealth. From these circum-

* Mathe Eva Popert, who died as Mrs. Heine, in 1799.

stances I draw the conclusion that the little Jew who took the beautiful person from the house of her rich parents and led her to his own home in Hanover, must have possessed very remarkable qualities besides a long beard, and must have been quite respectable.

He died early, leaving behind him his young widow and six children, all boys of the most tender age. She returned to Hamburg and died there, though not very old. In the sleeping-room of my uncle Salomon Heine, at Hamburg, I once saw the portrait of my grandmother. The painter who, in the manner of Rembrandt, had sought after effects of light and shadows, had given to the picture a black head-dress like that worn by nuns, a dark robe of similarly severe appearance, and a background black as night itself, so that the full-cheeked face, with its double chin, looked like the moon shining out from the dark clouds.

Her features still bore the traces of great beauty; they were earnest but at the same time mild, and especially the "*Morbidezza*" of the color of the skin gave to the whole face a peculiarly aristocratic appearance. Had the painter painted the lady with a great cross of diamonds upon her

breast, one would surely have taken her to be one of those abbesses who preside over the Protestant refuges for noble ladies, and who have been raised to the rank of princesses.

Of the children of my grandmother, only two, as far as I am aware, have inherited her extraordinary beauty, viz., my father, and my uncle, Salomon Heine, the deceased chief of the Hamburg banking house of that name.

The beauty of my father was of a nature rather too mild, without characteristic outlines, almost feminine. His brother's beauty was of a much more manly sort, and he was decidedly a man whose strength of character revealed itself in an imposing and sometimes even startling manner in his features, which were of noble and regular proportions.

All of his children, without exception, grew up to be exceedingly beautiful, but death took them away in the bloom of youth; and of that beautiful wreath composed of human flowers, two only are living at the present moment, viz., the present chief of the banking house and his sister, a person of rare. . . . *

* Three lines of the original manuscript have been cut

I loved all these children very much indeed, and I also loved their mother, who herself was really beautiful, and died very early; all of them have made me shed many a tear. I truly shall have at this moment to shake my fool's cap, in order to drown by the noise of its bells my tearful thoughts.

I have said above that my father's beauty had something feminine about it. By this I had not the slightest intention to indicate a want of manliness. The latter he has, especially during his youth, shown on many occasions, and I myself am, after all, a living proof of it. I did not want to injure him by what I have said. I was only referring to the form of his exterior appearance, which was not firm and compact, but rather full and softly rounded. The outlines of his features lacked a marked expression, and had something indefinite about them. In his later years he grew fat, but even in his youth he seems not to have been exactly lean.

This idea which I have of him was confirmed out, probably by Mr. Maximilian Heine, or by another of the tender relatives who objected to some phrase referring to the children of Salomon Heine.

by a portrait, which has since been destroyed during a fire in my mother's house, and which represented my father as a young fellow of eighteen or nineteen years of age, in a red uniform, with powdered hair, done up in a cue.

Fortunately this portrait was painted with pastel-colors. I say fortunately, because by the latter that flower-pollen, which we observe upon the faces of persons who powder themselves, can be much better indicated than by oil-colors with their varnish. The painter, by setting the rosy face in a frame of chalk-white powdered hair and a white necktie, gave it by means of this contrast a more decided color and made it stand out more strongly.

Even the scarlet color of the coat, which in oil pictures grins at us so horribly, had here, on the contrary, a favorable effect, because it softened somewhat the pink color of the face.

The type of beauty which was found in the features reminded one neither of the severe and chaste ideal expression of Greek works of art, nor of the style of the Renaissance, which spiritualistic and sentimental, at the same time, breathes the heathen fullness of health. On the contrary, the

portrait in question bore exactly the character of a time which had no character, and which loved not the beautiful, but rather the pretty, the nice, the coquettishly dainty ; the character of a time the flatness of which almost approached the poetical, of that sweetish Rococo period, with its queer flourishes and ornaments, which is also called the pig-tail time, and which bore as a sign, not upon the forehead but on the back of the head, a cue. Had the picture of my father in that portrait been somewhat more of a miniature in size, one might have believed that it was painted by the excellent Watteau for the purpose of parading it upon a fan of Madame de Pompadour, ornamented with fantastical arabesques, framed with many-colored gems and gold tinsel.

It is, perhaps, worth mentioning that my father, even in later years, remained faithful to the old-fashioned habit of powdering, and had himself powdered every day up to his very death, although he possessed the most beautiful hair imaginable. It was blond, almost golden, and of a softness which I never have found except in Chinese floss.

He surely would have liked to keep the cue also ; the progressive spirit of the time, however, was inexorable. In his distress my father struck upon an idea which was a kind of compromise. He sacrificed only the little black pad (*sachet*), the bag, but he now wore his long locks in a broad-braided *chignon*, fastened upon the head by means of a little comb. The braid, because of the softness of the hair, and on account of the powder, was scarcely perceptible, and for this device my father could not actually be called an apostate ; like many a person who would disguise his orthodoxy he had submitted to the cruel spirit of the times only as regards appearances.

The red uniform, in which my father was painted in the above-mentioned portrait, indicated his services under the House of Hanover. At the commencement of the French Revolution my father took part in the campaign against Flanders and Brabant in the suite of Prince Ernest of Cumberland, as "provision master" or commissary, *officier de bouche*, as the French, or "meal-worm" as the Prussians, call it.

The real office of the very young man was,

however, that of a favorite of the Prince, or that of a "Brummel" * *au petit pied*, minus the striped necktie; and he also shared the fate of those persons who are the playthings of princely favor. My father, it is true, was all his life long of the persuasion that the Prince, who later became King of Hanover, had never forgotten him, but he could not find an explanation why the Prince never sent for him, nor asked about him, as he certainly could not be sure that his former favorite might not live in a condition where he required help.

From that campaign period dated also a good many rather dangerous habits of my father, of which my mother was only gradually able to break him. Thus, for instance, he was easily induced to take part in high gambling, he protected the theatre or rather its priestesses, and had even a passion for horses and dogs. When he came to Düsseldorf, where to please my mother he established himself as a merchant, he brought with him twelve very fine horses. But he parted with

* "Brummel" was the name of a renowned lion of fashion and a favorite of the Prince Regent of England, who afterwards became King George IV of England.

them at the special wish of his young wife, who represented to him that his four-footed capital consumed too much oats and brought no profit.

More difficult was it for my mother to remove the groom, a big, burly fellow, who would lie all day long in the stable and play cards with some vagabond or other whom he had fished up in the street. Finally, he went of his own accord, accompanied by a gold repeating watch belonging to my father and some other valuable trinkets.

When my mother was rid of that good-for-nothing she also dismissed the hunting dogs of my father, with the exception of one, which was named "Joli," although he was very ugly. He found grace in her eyes, because there was absolutely nothing of the hunting dog about him, and there was a possibility of his becoming a faithful, virtuous house-dog. He inhabited the old *calèche* of my father in the empty stable, and when they met there, they used to throw very meaning glances at each other. 'Ah, yes, Joli!' sighed then my father, and Joli wagged mournfully his tail.

I believe the dog was a hypocrite, and once in a bad humor, when his favorite whimpered too

pitifully from the effects of a kick, my father acknowledged that the scoundrel was playing off. Finally, Joli grew very mangy, and at last became a walking barrack for fleas, and he had to be drowned, which my father permitted without interfering. Other men sacrifice their four-footed favorites with the same indifference as princes their two-footed ones.

From the campaign period of my father's life originated also his extraordinary predilection for the military vocation, or rather for playing soldier, the love for that merry, lazy life, in which gold tinsel and scarlet rags cover the interior hollowness, and intoxicated vanity can behave like courage.

Amongst his noble associates there existed neither military earnestness nor real desire for glory. Heroism was entirely out of the question. The chief thing for him was the parade of the guard-mount, the clanking of the sword, and the closely-fitting uniform so becoming to *beautiful* men.

How happy, therefore, was my father, when the militia was established at Düsseldorf, and when he, as an officer, wearing the beautiful dark-

blue uniform with sky-blue velvet facings, could defile before our house at the head of his column! He then saluted, with charming courtesy, my mother, who stood at the window blushing—the plumes upon his three-cornered hat fluttered so proudly, and so gaily glittered his epaulettes in the sunlight.

Still more happy was my father when it was his turn to mount guard as commanding officer, and to watch over the safety of the city. On such days, nothing but wine of Rüdesheim and Assmannshausen, and of the best growth, was flowing in the guard-house, and all at the expense of the commanding officer, whose liberality his militiamen, his “Creti” and “Pleti,” could not too highly praise.

My father also enjoyed among them a popularity that was quite as great as the enthusiasm which the Old Guard had for the Emperor Napoleon.

The latter, it is true, knew how to intoxicate his men in quite a different manner. My father's guards did not lack a certain bravery, even if there was the question of facing barrels of the greatest calibre, that is to say, if these barrels con-

tained wine. Nevertheless, their heroism was of a different kind from that which we find among the Emperor's guards. The latter died without surrendering, while the guardsmen of my father remained alive and surrendered often—what they had drunk.

As regards the safety of the city of Düsseldorf, it was probably greatly endangered during the nights when my father had to command in the guard-house. He, however, took care to despatch patrols, who singing and with clanking swords went in different directions through the city. It once happened that two such patrols, when meeting, wanted each to arrest the other as drunkards for disturbing the peace. Fortunately my countrymen are harmless, merry people; they are good-natured when they are drunk; consequently there was no harm done, for "*Ils ont le vin bon,*" and they mutually surrendered—it.

A limitless desire to enjoy life was the chief trait of my father's character; he longed for amusement, and was always gay and in rosy humor. In his mind there was a continual festival, and although boisterous dancing music did not always fill it, at least the tuning of the violins

never stopped. Always sky-blue gaiety, always frivolous fanfares—a carelessness which quickly forgot the day past and never thought of the coming morning.

This natural disposition was in curious contradiction with the gravity which was spread out over his serious, quiet face, and was shown in his whole attitude and in every movement of his body. Anyone who did not know him, and saw for the first time this earnest powdered figure, and these grave features, surely might have believed that he looked upon one of the seven wise men of Greece. But on becoming better acquainted with him it was easy to recognize that he was neither a Thales nor a Lampsacus,* who bothered himself with the problems of cosmogony. Not that his gravity was borrowed, but it reminded one of those ancient bas-reliefs, in which we see a merry child holding a great tragic mask before its face.

He was really a great child, with a child-like *naïveté* which certain virtuosos of reason might take for simplicity; but often, by some remark

* Stands evidently for Pittacus, and whether an intentional or an unintentional mistake is not clear.

of the deepest meaning, he betrayed a remarkable power of observation (intuition).

He recognized quickly, by his spiritual feelers, what a thinking person understands only after long reflection. He thought more with his heart than with his head, and he had the most amiable heart imaginable. The graceful smile which sometimes played around his lips, and which contrasted amusingly with the above-mentioned gravity, was the sweet reflection of his kindness of heart.

Even his voice, although manly and sonorous, had something childlike about it, I might almost say something that reminded one of the voices of the forest—for instance, of that of the red-breast; when he spoke, his voice went direct to the heart, just as if it had not to make its way through the ears.

He spoke the dialect of Hanover, in which city, just as in the neighboring country south of it, German is pronounced in the best manner. It was a great advantage for me that during my childhood, through my father, my ear became early accustomed to a good pronunciation of German; for in our city itself that hateful

jargon of the Lower Rhine is spoken, which, although in Düsseldorf it is still somewhat supportable, in the neighboring city of Cologne becomes actually disgusting. Cologne is the Tuscany of a classically bad pronunciation of the German, and Kobes speaks with Marizzebill in a sing-song, which sounds, or almost smells, like stale eggs.

In the language of the Düsseldorf people, a transition to the frog-croaking of the Dutch swamps begins to be perceptible. Be it far from me to depreciate the peculiar beauties of the Dutch language; only I must say that I have no ear for them. It may even be true that our own German language, as patriotic linguists of the Netherlands have maintained, is only a kind of corrupted Dutch. Possibly this is so; but it reminds me of the assertion of a cosmopolitan zoologist, who declares the monkey to be the ancestor of the human race; men, according to his opinion, are only developed, or rather over-developed, monkeys. If the monkeys could speak, they would probably make the assertion that men are only degenerated monkeys, and that mankind is a sort of spoiled monkey-

dom, just as, in the opinion of the Hollanders, the German language is spoiled Dutch.

I say : if monkeys could speak, although I am not at all persuaded of their incapability of speaking. The negroes on the Senegal maintain firmly that the monkeys are men just like ourselves, only smarter, because they refrain from speaking in order not to be recognized as men, and not to be forced to work ; their scurrilous monkey tricks are said by them to be nothing but a clever dissimulation, by which they wish to appear to the potentates of this earth as unfit to be used in the same manner as the rest of us.

Such absence of all vanity would give me a very high idea of that race which guards a silent incognito, and perhaps makes fun of our simplicity. They remain free in their forests, never giving up their natural condition ; and they would have a right to say that man is a degenerated monkey.

Perhaps our ancestors of the eighteenth century were already aware of this ; and instinctively feeling that our polished over-civilization was only a kind of varnished rottenness, and how necessary it was to return to nature, tried to approach

again to our original type, to the natural monkeydom. They did all that could be done ; and finally, when there was nothing lacking to them in order to be monkeys except the tail, they adopted instead of it a pig-tail. Thus the pig-tail is an important symptom of a serious necessity, and not simply a frivolous invention. But it is in vain that I try, by shaking the bells of my fool's cap, to drown with their noise the melancholy which comes over me when I think of my deceased father. *

He was of all human beings the one whom upon earth I have loved most ; he has been dead now more* than twenty-five years. I never thought I should lose him, and even now I can hardly realize that I have actually lost him. It is so difficult to persuade oneself that those whom we have loved so very much are really dead ; but, in fact, they are not dead ; they continue to live in our hearts.

Not a single night has passed in which I have not thought of my deceased father ; and when

* As Heine's father died the 2nd of December, 1828, we have a right to conclude that he commenced these Memoirs in 1854.

I awake in the morning, I still often imagine that I hear the sound of his voice, like the echo of a dream. Then it seems to me as if I had to dress myself hastily, and go down to the great room, as I used to do when a boy.

My father was always accustomed to rise and to go to his business very early, in winter as well as in summer; and, when I got up, I usually found him already at his writing desk, where he, without raising his eyes, held out his hand for me to kiss it—a beautiful, finely-cut, aristocratic hand, which he used to wash in bran of almonds. I still see it before me, I still see every little blue vein which ran across this marble-white hand. It is as if the odor of almonds were still tickling my nostrils, and my eyes become moist.

Sometimes the kissing of the hand was not all, and my father took me between his knees and kissed me upon my forehead. One morning he embraced me with unusual tenderness and said: “I have dreamt something beautiful of you, and I am very much satisfied with you, my dear Harry.” While he spoke these naïve words a smile played around his lips which seemed to say: “Let

Harry be ever so naughty in reality, I will nevertheless dream something beautiful of him, so that nothing may prevent me from loving him."

Harry is, among the English, the familiar name of those who are called Henry, and it corresponds exactly to my German name Heinrich, which I received when I was baptized. The pet names for Heinrich in the dialect of my native country, are anything but euphonious, and sound almost scurrilous; for instance, Heinz, Heinzchen, Hinz. Heinzchen is also the name given to little domestic goblins, and to puss-in-boots in the puppet play, just as puss in the popular fable is called Hinze.

Not on account of this inconvenience, but in honor of one of his best friends in England, my father anglicized my name. Mr. Harry was my father's correspondent in Liverpool. He knew the best manufacturers of velveteen in that city, an article which had become very dear to my father's heart, more in consequence of his ambition than of his desire for gain; for although he maintained that much money could be made with it, this always remained problematical, and my father would even have been willing to lose

money, had there been a question of selling a better quality and a greater quantity of velveteen than his competitors. My father possessed, in fact, no real calculating commercial mind, although he was always calculating; and commerce to him was a sort of amusement, just as playing soldiers or cooking is to children.

His activity was, in fact, nothing else but a continually being busy. Velveteen was his special hobby, and he was perfectly happy when the great car-loads were unloaded, and when, during the unloading, all the trading Jews of the neighborhood filled the hall of the house; these were his best customers, and with them his velveteen was not only in great demand, but also met with honorable praise.

As you, my dear reader, perhaps do not know what "velveteen" is, I take the liberty to tell you that it is an English word, meaning velvet-like, and this name is given to a kind of cotton-velvet, of which very beautiful trousers, vests, and even jackets are manufactured. This material is also called "Manchester," after the city of that name, where it was first manufactured.

Because the name of a friend of my father

who best understood the buying of velveteen was Harry, I was also named thus, and I was called Harry in our family, among our friends, and among our neighbors.

Even at the present day I like to be called by that name, although it has caused me much annoyance, perhaps the most bitter annoyance of my childhood. Only now, when I no longer live amongst the living, and consequently all social vanity has become extinct in my soul, I can speak about it without embarrassment.

Here in France my German name, "Heinrich," was, immediately after my arrival in Paris, translated into "Henri"; and I had to submit to it, and was finally obliged to call myself so, because the word "Heinrich" does not suit a French ear, and because the French make everything as comfortable to themselves as possible. Even the name "Henri Heine" can never be pronounced quite correctly; most of them call me M. Enri Enn; many contract this into "Enrienne," and some even give me the appellation "M. Un Rien."

This hurts me in many ways, especially with regard to my literary occupation; it is however,

in another way of benefit to me. For instance, among my fine countrymen who come to Paris, there are some who would like to calumniate me; but as they always pronounce my name in the German language, the French never even imagine that the wicked fellow and poisoner of the fountains of innocence, about whom these gentlemen are fearfully raving, is identical with their friend, Monsieur Enrienne. These noble souls give vent to their virtuous zeal all in vain; the French do not know that it is I of whom they speak, and trans-rhenanic virtue thus spends its arrows of calumny without hitting the mark.

It is somewhat awkward if one's name is badly pronounced. There are people who, in such cases, show great sensitiveness. I once indulged in the joke of asking old Cherubini whether it was true that the Emperor Napoleon always pronounced his name Sherubini instead of Kerubini, although the Emperor knew Italian well enough to know, that in it *ch* is pronounced like *que* or like *k*. This question put the old maestro into a most comical rage.

I have never felt like that.

Heinrich, Harry, Henri—all these names sound

well when they are falling from beautiful lips. Best, of course, it sounds to be called Signor Enrico. This was my name under the clear blue sky, with its embroidery of great silver stars, peculiar to the summer nights of that noble and unfortunate country which is the home of beauty, and which has given birth to Rafael Sanzio, of Urbino, to Joachim Rossini, and to the Princess Christina Belgiojoso.

As my bodily condition leaves me no hope of ever being again in society, and as the latter does not really exist any more for me, I have also stripped off all those chains of personal vanity, which everyone wears who must waste his time among men, and in the so-called world.

Consequently I am at present free to speak about the mishap that was connected with my name of "Harry," and which embittered and poisoned the most beautiful years of the spring-time of my life.

The case was as follows : In my native city there lived a man who was called Dirty Michael, because every morning he went with his car, drawn by a donkey, through the streets of the city, stopping before each house in order to collect the

rubbish which the servant girls had swept together in nice little heaps, and to transport it to the field outside of the city, where the offal was deposited. The man looked like his business, and the donkey, again, looked like his master ; and he stopped before the houses or went off in a trot according to the different modulations in which Michael called out to him the word "Haaryh" !

Was this really his name, or was it only an exclamation for inciting the donkey to go ? I do not know ; but one thing is certain, that on account of the resemblance of that name to my name Harry, I had to suffer very much from my schoolmates and the neighbors' children. In order to tease me, they pronounced it exactly in the manner in which Dirty Michael called his donkey ; and when I became angry about it, the rogues assumed the most innocent air, and asked me to teach them precisely how my name and that of the donkey ought to be pronounced, so that they might avoid mistakes. At the same time, however, they appeared very unteachable, and maintained that Michael on some occasions drew out the first syllable very long, and cut the second syllable very short, while on other occasions just

the opposite happened, which made his call sound exactly like my name; and the boys, in the most crazy manner, mixing up all conceptions referring to me with those referring to the donkey, and *vice versa*, produced such a queer *coq-à-l'âne* that everybody laughed, while I cried.

When I complained about this to my mother, she said that if I would only try to learn a great deal, and become very clever, then nobody would mistake me for a donkey. Nevertheless, my homonym with those long ears remained my nightmare. The big boys, when passing me, saluted me with a "Haa-ryh!" The little ones gave me the same greeting, but from a certain distance. At school the same theme was harped upon with the most studied cruelty. Whenever there was a question about some donkey or other, they threw side-glances at me, which always made me blush; and it is really incredible what a faculty school-boys have for discovering or inventing something disagreeable.

Thus, for instance, one would ask the other: "What is the difference between a zebra and the ass of Balaam?"

The answer was: "The one speaks Zebrew,

and the other spoke Hebrew." Then came the question: "What is the difference between the ass of Dirty Michael and his namesake?" And the impertinent answer was: "We do not know any." Then I wanted to throw myself amongst them and to beat them, but they soon quieted me again; and my friend Dietrich, who understood how to manufacture extraordinarily beautiful little pictures of saints, and who later became a renowned painter, on one occasion consoled me by promising me a picture. He painted for me a Saint-Michael — but the wicked fellow had horribly mocked me. The archangel had the features of Dirty Michael, his horse looked exactly like the donkey of that fellow, and instead of a dragon he pierced with his spear the carcass of a dead cat.

Even the gentle effeminate Franz * with his golden hair, whom I loved so much, once betrayed me. He embraced me, leaning his cheek tenderly upon mine, remained for a long while sentimentally resting upon my breast, when all at once he cried into my ear, laughing loudly, "Haa-ryh!" and

* Franz von Zuccalmaglio, to whom Heine's first poem is addressed, which commences with the words: "Es zieht mich nach Nordland ein gold'ner Stern."

then he ran away, modulating the hateful word in all possible manners, so that it resounded far and wide through the corridors of the cloister.

Still worse was I treated by the children of our neighbors, little blackguards of the lowest kind, whom in Düsseldorf we used to call "Haluten," a word which those whose hobby is etymological studies surely would derive from the "Helots" of Sparta.

Such a "Helot" was little "Jupp," which means Joseph; but I will also give his family name, so that nobody can possibly mistake him for Jupp Rörsch, who was a very good little neighbor, and who at present is a post-official in Bonn. Jupp Flader, on the contrary, when he met me, always used to strike me with a fishing-rod, which he was accustomed to carry. He also liked very much to throw horse-dung at my head, which he gathered from the street warm as it came from the oven of Nature, and on such occasions he never forgot to cry out his hateful "Haa-ryh!" in all possible modulations.

The wicked boy was the grandchild of the old woman Flader, who was one of the clients of my father. This poor grandmother was just as good-natured as the boy was wicked; a picture

of poverty and misery, not disgusting, however, but rather heart-rending. She was surely over eighty years old, a great lank, slovenly figure, a white leather-face, with pale sunken eyes, a low, rattling, whining voice, and begging without the slightest ceremony, which is ever terrible.

My father always offered her a chair when she came to get her monthly allowance, on the days when he, as the almoner, distributed money to the poor.

Of these occasions, when my father was officiating as an almoner, I only remember those winter-days, when he discharged his duty very early in the morning while it was still dark. My father used to sit before a large table, which was covered with paper cornets of all sizes, filled with money; instead of the silver candlesticks generally used, and of which he wished not to boast before the poor—he whose heart possessed so much tact—there were standing now upon the table two copper candlesticks with tallow candles, that, with their thick black-burned wicks and their red flame, threw a kind of sad light upon the people present.

Poor persons of every age were standing in

a line extending as far as the hall, and one after the other came to get his paper cornet. Many of them received two — a big one, which contained the private alms of my father, and a small one, which contained the money of the poor-fund.

I was sitting upon a high chair near my father, and I handed him the paper cornets, for my father wished that I should learn how one ought to give, and in this line a great deal could be learned of my father.*

There are many people who have their hearts in the right spot, but they do not understand how to give, and it takes a long time before the wish of the heart finds its way to their pocket ; between

* Alfred Meissner relates, in his "Reminiscences of Heinrich Heine," the following in regard to the poet himself: "Many refugees have become acquainted with his benevolence without ever being asked by him to what party they belonged, even though they came from a camp, the flag of which he was ridiculing, and where his antagonists had gathered. He contributed to all collections of money for a noble cause, or for an undeserved misfortune, even more than his means permitted him to do, and as an excuse he used to say: 'I like to leave from time to time my *carte-de-visite* with our Lord.'"

the good intention and the execution a long time elapses, for their intention travels at the rate of an old mail-coach. Between the heart of my father and his pocket, there already existed, so to say, a railroad. That he did not become rich by that railroad is a matter of course. With the *Chemin de fer du Nord* and the *Chemin de fer de Lyon* more money has been made.

Most of my father's clients were women—old ones, however; and even at a later period, when his circumstances began to be anything but splendid, he had a clientelage of aged women-folk to whom he gave small pensions. They were lying in ambush for him at every place where they knew that he had to pass, and so it happened that he had a kind of secret body-guard of old women, like the late Robespierre.

In this old guard there was many a hag who ran after him not because of her poverty, but because she liked him personally, and was glad to see his kind and always amiable face.

He was politeness personified, not only toward the younger but also toward the older persons of the female sex. Those old women who prove very cruel antagonists when they are offended,

are the most grateful people when you have paid them some attention and done them some kindness ; and whoever likes to be paid with flattery finds in them persons who are not stingy, while the pert young things on whom we waste all kinds of attention, scarcely deign us worthy of a bow.

Considering, therefore, the fact that for those *beautiful* men whose specialty consists just in being *beautiful*, flattery is a great need, and that it is indifferent to them whether the incense comes from a rosy or from a withered mouth, provided it is furnished strongly and in sufficient quantity, it will be easily understood that my father, without having exactly speculated upon it, in his intercourse with those old ladies, did a good business.

It would be difficult to believe how great was the dose of incense with which they often smoked him, and how well he was able to bear even the strongest portion. This was owing to his happy temperament, it was not by any means simplicity. He knew very well that they flattered him, but he knew also that flattery is sweet like sugar, and he was just like a child which says to its

mother : "Flatter me a little, even if a little bit too much."

The relation, however, which my father kept up with those women had still another, more serious reason, for he was their adviser ; and it is remarkable that this man, who was so little able to advise himself, was the personified wisdom of the world, when there was a necessity for giving others good counsel in trouble. He took in at a glance the whole position ; and when the afflicted client had explained to him that in her business everything was growing worse and worse, he brought her complaints to an end with a remark, which, when everything was going badly, I have very often heard him make, viz. : "In this case we must tap another cask." By this he meant to say that one ought not stubbornly to cling to a lost cause, but to commence something new and enter upon another course. It is better to push out the bottom of the old barrel, from which there flows only sour wine, and that only sparingly, and "to tap a new cask !" But instead of this, people lay themselves down with open mouth under the dry bung-hole, and hope that sweet wine will flow from it abundantly.

When old "Hanne" (Johanna) complained to my father that the number of her customers was decreasing, and that there was scarcely a bite, or what was still more disagreeable to her, hardly a drink left in her house, he gave her first a thaler and then he meditated for a while.

Old Hanne had formerly been one of the most fashionable of midwives, but in later years she took to drinking and also to snuffing tobacco; and as her nose during that period was continually thawing, and the drops descending from it made brown spots upon the white linen of the lying-in ladies, she everywhere lost her custom.

After my father had carefully considered the matter, he finally said: "Well, we must tap another cask, and this time it ought to be a cask of brandy; I advise you to open a bar, a kind of little brandy shop, in a good-looking street near the harbor, which is frequented by sailors."

The ex-midwife followed this advice, established a drinking-shop near the port, where she did a good business, and would certainly have become rich, had she not been, unfortunately, her own best customer. She also sold tobacco, and I often saw her standing in front of her shop with her red

swollen tobacco-nose, a living advertisement which attracted many a sailor.

Among the best qualities of my father was his great politeness, which, as a real gentleman, he showed just as much toward the poor as toward the rich. I especially noticed this on the days above-mentioned, when he handed to the poor their paper cornets filled with money, on which occasions he always added a few polite words.

I there had a chance to really learn something; and many of those charitable men, who are accustomed to throw their money right at the heads of the poor, so that every thaler produces a wound, might also have profited much by this lesson. My father kindly asked most of the poor women how they were faring, and he had become so accustomed to using the phrase, "I have the honor," that he even employed it, when he had to show the door to some old crone who was dissatisfied and behaved impudently.

Towards old Flader he was especially polite, and, as above mentioned, he always offered her a chair, for she was really weak in her legs, and was hardly able to hobble away even with her cane.

The last time she came to my father to ask for her monthly allowance, she was so feeble, that Jupp, her grandchild, had to lead her. The latter threw a curious glance at me when he saw me sitting at the table near my father. The old woman, besides the small paper cornet, received from him a large private paper cornet, at which she burst into a torrent of blessings and tears.

It is a fearful sight to see an old grandmother cry so hard. I was tempted to cry myself, and I believe the old woman felt it. She did not cease praising me, saying what a pretty child I was, and she added she would pray to the Mother of God, that He would never let me suffer hunger, and that I would never have to beg money from other people.

My father was not very well pleased with these words, but the old woman meant them well. In her eyes there was something ghostly, but at the same time pious and kind, and at last she said to her grandchild: "Go, Jupp, and kiss the hand of the dear child." Jupp made a sour grimace, but he obeyed the order of his grandmother. I felt his burning lips upon my hand like the sting of a viper. Hardly would I be able to tell why

I did it, but I took out of my pocket all my "greasy mannikins" and gave them to Jupp who, with his rude, idiotic face, counted them piece after piece and then composedly put them into the pocket of his breeches.

For the instruction of the reader let it be said that a "greasy mannikin" is the name of a greasy thick copper coin worth about a cent.

The old woman, Flader, died soon afterwards, but Jupp is still alive if he has not been hung. The wicked boy remained unaltered. The very next day, after I had seen him at my father's, I met him in the street. He carried his well-known fishing-rod. He again struck me with it, threw horse-dung again at me, called again his hateful "Haa-ryh!" so loudly, and imitated the voice of "Dirty Michael" so faithfully, that the donkey of the latter, which with its cart happened to be in a neighboring street, thought it heard the voice of its master and answered with a gay "Ee-ah!"

As I have said, Jupp's grandmother died soon afterwards; she had the name of being a witch, but she surely was none, although our "Zippel" firmly maintained it.

"Zippel" was the nickname of a middle-aged woman, whose real name was Sybilla, who was at first my nurse, and remained afterwards in our house. She happened to be present in the room the morning when the scene above described took place, during which old Flader praised me so much and admired my beauty as a boy.

When Zippel heard her words, she recalled the old popular superstition that some harm will occur to children who are praised too much, that in consequence of it they are apt to fall sick, or that something will happen to them. In order to turn aside the evil which, in her opinion, was threatening me, she had recourse to a means recommended by the popular belief, and which consists in spitting three times at the praised child. She at once ran towards me, and quickly spat three times upon my head.

This, however, was only a provisional spitting, for the "knowing people" assert that, in case the dangerous praise has been given by a witch, the evil enchantment can only be broken by a person who herself is a witch; and for this reason Zippel decided to go with me the very same day to a woman who was known to her as a witch,

and who, as I have ascertained since, had rendered her many a service by means of her mysterious and forbidden knowledge. This witch, with her thumb moistened with spittle, stroked a place on the top of my head, where she had cut off a few hairs, and also some other places, mumbling at the same time all kinds of abracadabra nonsense; and it may be that even then I was ordained to be a priest of the devil.

One thing is certain, that this woman, whose acquaintance I kept up afterwards, when I had grown up, initiated me into the occult art.

True, I have never become a magician; but I know magic, and especially, I well know what can be done without the help of magic.

The woman in question was called "Die Meisterin," the mistress, or "Die Göchin," the woman from Goch, because she was born in Goch, where also her husband, who had carried on the infamous trade of an executioner, had had his domicile, and from which place he was called to all parts of the country to perform his office. It was said that he had left many arcana to his widow, and the latter understood how to profit by this rumor.

Her best customers were the bar-keepers, to whom she sold the "dead fingers," which, as she pretended, her husband had left her by inheritance. These dead-fingers are the fingers of thieves that have been hung, and serve for the purpose of giving a good taste to the beer in the cask, and of augmenting its quantity ; for if one fastens the finger of a person that has been hung, or still better of a person that has been hung innocently, to a string and lets it hang down into the cask, the beer not only grows better in taste, but one may draw from this cask twice as much, nay even four times as much, as from another cask of equal size. Enlightened bar-keepers generally use a more rational device for augmenting the quantity of the beer, but then it loses in strength.

Young persons of a tender heart were also among the customers of the "Meisterin," and she provided them with "love-potions," to which, in her rage of a charlatan for Latin words—that induced her to invent names which sounded still more like Latin than the real Latin terms—she gave the name of "*Philtrariums*." The man who gave such a philter to his sweetheart was called by her the "*Philtrarius*," and the female

who received it, was named the "*Philtrariata*."

Occasionally it happened that the "*Philtrariums*" had no effect, or even one opposite to that which was intended.*

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But it was not her knowledge of sorcery that induced me to visit the woman from Goch, for though I always kept up her acquaintance, when I was sixteen years of age I used to go to her house more frequently than I had done before, attracted by a magic that was stronger than that of all the bombastic Latin *philtraria*. She had a niece, who, like myself, was not more than sixteen, but who had grown up suddenly, and whose tall and slender form made her appear much older. On account of her sudden growth she also looked rather thin. She had the small waist which we find among the quadroons of the West Indies, and as she wore no corset and not a dozen petticoats, she resembled with her tightly-clinging dress a statue in a wet garment. No marble statue, however, could compete with her in

* We have omitted here a passage which we thought had better remain untranslated.

beauty, and every one of her movements revealed the rhythm of her body, I might even say, the music of her soul. None of the daughters of Niobe had a more finely-cut face. Its color, just as that of her skin in general, was of a changing white. Her great deep-dark eyes looked as if they had just pronounced a riddle and were waiting quietly for an answer, while the mouth with its strongly-curved bow and oblong teeth, white as ivory, seemed to say: You are stupid and never will be able to guess it.

Her hair was red, perfectly blood-red. It fell over her shoulders in long locks which she could tie together under her chin. But this made her appear as if some one had cut her throat, and the blood was welling forth from it in red streams.

The voice of Josepha or of "red Sefchen," as the beautiful niece of the woman from Goch was called, was not exactly sonorous, and occasionally her speech sounded as if it came from a distance, being almost inaudible; when she was excited, however, sounds of the purest metallic tone broke forth which greatly affected me, especially because Josepha's voice resembled so much my own.

Often, when she spoke, I was startled, thinking I heard myself, and her song also recalled to me dreams in which I have heard myself singing in the same manner in which she sang.

She knew a good many old popular songs, and it was perhaps she who awakened in me a love for this kind of poetry; there is certainly no doubt that she had a great influence upon the nascent poet, so that my first poems, the "Traumbilder" (Dream-Pictures), which I soon afterwards wrote, have a kind of gloomy coloring and are full of cruelty, just like that attachment to her, which threw its blood-red shadows over my young life and thoughts.*

* In the preface to the French edition of his poems (June 1855), Heine remarks that the first four poems of his "Book of Songs," are among his earliest literary productions, and were composed at the same time as the ballad of the "Two Grenadiers." In order that the reader may form an idea of the remarkable beauty of the "Dream-Pictures," we give here, in Leland's translation, the one already alluded to in our introductory essay, on the "Life and Works of Heinrich Heine" (p. 37):

A dream right strange yet dread to see,
Delighted once, yet frightened me;
E'en yet I see its grisly forms,
E'en yet my heart still heaves with storms.

Among the songs which Josepha sang, there was a popular ballad which she had learned from

There rose a garden very fair,
And I was glad to wander there ;
There looked upon me pleasant flowers,
They gave me hope of golden hours.

There birds were chirping in the grove
Full many a charming song of love ;
The red sun shot a golden ray
On all the flowers in colors gay.

Sweet perfumes stole among the trees,
And light and loving blew the breeze,
And all was gleaming, all was glad,
And all for me in splendor clad.

And in this lovely flower-land
I saw a marble fountain stand ;
And washing linen in the stream,
I saw a maiden in my dream.

Sweet cheeks, mild eyes, with glances faint,
The blonde-haired picture of a saint ;
And as I looked, the maid seemed grown
So strange, and yet of old well known.

And as she urged her task along,
The maiden sung an elvish song :
" Water, water, run and shine !
Wash my linen fair and fine !"

Then slowly to her side I drew,
And said, " O maiden, tell me true,
Fair as the fairies, sweet and bright,
For whom is washed this garment white ?"

the old woman Zippel, and which the latter had, during my childhood, also sung often to me, so

“Be ready soon!” she said aloud,
“It is for you I wash the shroud”;
And scarce her words were spoken through,
When forth like foam the vision flew.

And yet enchanted still I stood,
Deep in a dark and gloomy wood;
The trees to heaven their branches raised
And I stood thinking, all amazed.

And hark! a heavy echo rose,
As though some axe struck distant blows.
In haste through brake and bush I roam,
And then into a clearing come.

And central in the verdant space
A mighty oak had found a place;
And see! the maiden strange and fair
Was hewing with a hatchet there!

Blow fell on blow; between each stroke,
She sang her song to axe and oak:
“Iron mine, iron shine!
Cut the oaken coffer fine!”

Then slowly to her side I drew,
And said, “I pray you tell me true,
Young maiden strange, and wondrous fair,
For whom is meant the coffer there?”

“Short time is left,” she quickly spoke,
“I cut your coffin from this oak”;
And scarce her words were spoken through,
When forth like foam the vision flew.

that I remembered two stanzas of it, which I give here, especially as I have never seen them

Around me spread all dead and gray,
A barren heath far far away;
I could not tell how came the thing,
Or how I came there shuddering,

And as I wandered on my way,
A brighter place before me lay;
I hastened still, I hastened more,
And found the form I saw before.

On wide-spread heath, stood blonde-white maid
And dug the earth with burial spade;
I hardly dared to look, for she
Was fair, yet fearful, still to me.

And as she urged her task along,
The maiden sang an elvish song:
"Spade, my spade, sharp and tried,
Dig the grave out deep and wide!"

Then slowly to her side I drew,
And said: "I pray you, tell me true,
Young maiden strange, and fair, and sweet,
What means this grave before our feet?"

And quick she spoke, "Be still! it's true—
This cool, deep grave I've dug for you!"
And as the lovely maid replied,
The grave before me opened wide.

And as the opening grave I view
A freezing horror thrills me through,
And plunging in its funeral night
I fall — but wake once more to light.

in any collection of popular ballads. They read as follows:

First the wicked old Tragig speaks:—

“Dear Otilie, dear Otilie,
Thou, sure shalt not the last one be—
Say, wish you to hang on the lofty tree?
Or wish you to swim in the dark blue sea?
Or would you kiss the naked sword,
Given to us by our Lord?”

Upon this Otilie answers:—

“I wish not to hang on the lofty tree;
I wish not to swim in the dark blue sea;
I wish to kiss the naked sword,
Given to us by our Lord.”

Once when red Sefchen was singing this song and had arrived at the end of the second stanza, I, perceiving her great emotion, also became so deeply moved that I suddenly began to cry, and sobbing we fell into each other's arms; and for almost an hour we spoke not a word, while all the time our tears were flowing, and we looked at each other, so to say, through a veil of tears.

I asked Sefchen to write down for me those two stanzas, and she did so, not with ink, however, but with her blood. The red autograph I lost afterwards, but the two stanzas remained indelibly inscribed on my memory.

The husband of the woman from Goch was the brother of Sefchen's father, who likewise had been an executioner; but as the latter had died early, the woman from Goch took the little child into her house. Soon afterwards, however, when her husband also died, and when she went to Düsseldorf, she gave the child to its grandfather, who was also an executioner, having his domicile in Westphalia.

There in the "Freihaus," as the executioner's dwelling was called, Sefchen remained until she was fourteen years old. At that time her grandfather died, and the woman from Goch took her back again.

On account of the stain adhering to her from her birth, Sefchen, during her childhood, until she grew up to be a maiden, led a very lonesome life, and was excluded from all contact with society, especially while she was living in her grandfather's house. It was for this reason

that she was very much afraid of human beings, and sensitively shrank from coming in contact with any stranger. To this peculiarity of her character must be added a love for dreamy, mysterious thoughts, united with a stubborn and dogged obstinacy and wildness.

Strange! even in her dreams, as she once told me, she did not live with human beings, for she dreamt only of animals.

In the seclusion of the executioner's house, she could occupy herself with naught except the old books of her grandfather, who had taught her how to read and write, but who was very sparing of his words.

Sometimes he was for several days absent from home with his assistants, and the child had then to stay in the "Freihaus," which stood near the place where the gallows was erected, in a lonely retired part of the forest. With her there remained, at those times, only three old women with grey, shaky heads, sitting all day long at their whirring spinning-wheels, coughing, quarreling, and drinking great quantities of brandy.

Especially on winter nights, when the wind outside was shaking the old oak trees, and when,

in the large fire-place, where a bright fire was flaring, a strange howling was heard, poor Sefchen felt very uncomfortable in the lonely house; for just on such nights a visit from the thieves was dreaded—not from the living, but from the dead ones—from those who had been hung and had broken loose from the gallows, and who were knocking now at the low window-panes of the house, asking for admission, in order to warm themselves a little. Those thieves make such pitiful grimaces as they are shivering with cold. One can only get rid of them by fetching from the room where the iron implements are kept, an executioner's sword, and threatening them with it; then they hasten away like a whirlwind.

Sometimes they are attracted, not only by the fire in the chimney, but also by the desire to get back their fingers, which the executioner has stolen. In case you do not close your doors well, they will come in, for even after their death they are incited by their old desire of stealing, and they will steal the linen out of the closets and from the beds. Once an old woman just in time became aware of the theft and ran after the dead thief, who tried to make his escape, while the

sheet he had stolen was fluttering in the wind, and, grasping a corner of it, she tore away from him his spoil at the moment when he had reached the gallows and wanted to mount up to its beams.

Only on those days when the grandfather was preparing for a great execution, did his colleagues from the neighborhood come to visit him, and then cooking, roasting, eating and drinking went on, while there was but little talking and no singing. Then they drank from silver goblets; while only cans with wooden covers were given to the odious executioner and his assistants, when they stopped at some inn, although to all the other guests cans with tin covers were served. In many places it is even customary to break the glass from which the executioner has drunk; nobody speaks to him, and everybody avoids the slightest contact with him. This disgrace rests equally upon all his relations, for which reason the families of executioners marry only amongst each other.

Sefchen told me that, when she was eight years of age, on a fine day in autumn, an extraordinary number of guests came to her father's place, although there was no execution about to take place, nor did any other odious official duties

require their presence. These guests consisted of more than a dozen little old men, some with hoary and some with bald heads, who carried under their long red cloaks their swords, and wore their Sunday clothes, which were of a very old-fashioned cut. They came, as they said, to "meet," and all that there was most dainty in the kitchen and cellar was served to them.

They were the oldest of the executioners, coming from the most distant places; they had not seen each other for a long time, shook hands continually, spoke little, and mostly in a mysterious language of signs, and amused themselves after their fashion, *i.e.*, "*moulct tristement*," as Froissard says, when describing the banquet of the English after the battle of Poitiers.

When night approached, the master of the house sent his men-servants away, and ordered the old housekeeper to fetch from the cellar three dozen bottles of the best Rhenish wine, and to place them upon the stone table which stood outside near some high oak trees, forming a semi-circle; he also ordered her to put the iron holders for the torch-lights in their places, and then under some pretext, he sent her with the other two old

hags away from the house. Even the openings between the boards of the watch-dog's hut were stopped up, and the dog was carefully fastened to the chain.

Her grandfather gave red Sefchen permission to stay in the house. He asked her to rinse carefully the large silver cup, upon which the sea-gods, with their dolphins and shell-trumpets, were represented, and to place it upon the above-mentioned stone table; and then, in a somewhat embarrassed manner, he told her to retire at once to her small chamber, and go to bed.

The Neptune cup Sefchen rinsed very obediently, and put it upon the table where the wine bottles stood; but instead of going to bed, she hid herself, impelled by her curiosity, behind some shrubs near the oaks, at a place from which, though she could not hear much, she could see everything that was going on.

The strange men, preceded by her grandfather, came marching solemnly in pairs, and sat down upon high wooden blocks that stood in a semi-circle around the stone table, while the torches, which had been lit, illuminated with a ghastly glow the stony expression of their severe faces.

They sat there for a long while in silence, or rather mumbling something to themselves, perhaps praying. Then the grandfather filled the goblet with wine, and one after the other emptied it, handing it, when it had been refilled, to his neighbor, while after each draught they all shook hands in a hearty manner.

Finally, the grandfather made a speech, of which Sefchen could hear scarcely anything, and of which she understood nothing; but he must have been speaking of sad things, because large tears were falling from the eyes of the old man, and the other old men also began to cry bitterly, which was horrible to see; because these people otherwise looked as hard and weather-beaten as the gray stone figures which ornament the doors of certain churches—and now tears were pouring forth from those staring stony eyes, and they sobbed like children.

The moon at the same time looked down so mournfully from out her veil of mist and from the starless sky, that the heart of the little girl threatened to break with pity. She was especially moved by the grief of one little old man, who wept more bitterly than all the others, and who

lamented so loudly that she could plainly hear some of his words. He cried continually : "Oh, God! oh, God! this misfortune lasts already so long! no human soul can stand it any longer! Oh, God! thou art unjust! yes, unjust!" His colleagues seemed to have great trouble in quieting him.

At last the assembly arose from their seats; they threw off their red cloaks, and holding their swords under their arms, they went in pairs to a place behind a tree, where a spade was lying, and one of them quickly dug a deep hole. After this was done Sefchen's grandfather, who had not thrown off his red cloak as the others had done, stepped forth and took from under it a white package, which was very narrow in appearance but had at least the length of a Flemish ell, and was wrapped up in a sheet; he then carefully placed it in the open hole, which in great haste he filled up again.

Poor Sefchen could endure it no longer in her hiding place; while she had been looking at the mysterious funeral, her hair had been standing on end, and the poor child in the anguish of her heart hastened to her sleeping-room, hid herself beneath her bed-covers, and fell asleep.

The next morning the whole appeared to Sefchen like a dream ; but when she saw the freshly dug-up earth behind the tree, she recognized that it had been real. She pondered for a long while as to what might lie buried there : a child ?—an animal ?—a treasure ?—but she never told anyone a single word about this night scene, and as years went on it retired into the background of her memory.

It was only when, five years later, her grandfather had died, and the old woman from Goch came to take the little girl to Düsseldorf, that she dared to open her heart to her aunt. The latter, however, was neither terrified nor astonished by the strange story ; on the contrary, she seemed delighted, and said that neither a child, nor a cat, nor a treasure was hidden in the hole, but the old sword of her grandfather, the one with which he had cut off the heads of one hundred poor sinners. She also told her that it was a custom and usage among the executioners not to keep in their houses a sword which has a hundred times been employed in their bloody work, and especially never to use it again ; for an executioner's sword of that kind,

they say, is not like other swords, but it acquires, gradually, a secret self-consciousness, and finally needs rest in the grave, just like a human being.

Occasionally, as some assert, such swords become cruel from the habit of shedding blood so often, and then they thirst for blood, and at the midnight hour you can plainly hear them rattle in wild passion in the closet where they are hung up, and what a fearful noise they make; some of them become even as mischievous and as wicked as we human beings, and then they delude the unfortunate man who has them in his hands, to such an extent, that he often wounds his best friends with them. Thus it once happened that in the family of the woman from Goch one brother stabbed another with such a sword.

Nevertheless, the woman from Goch acknowledged that with such a hundred-murder-sword one can execute the rarest feats of witchcraft; and on the very same night she hastened to the tree which Sefchen indicated to her, in order to dig up the buried sword, and from that time she kept it with her other implements of magic in her lumber-room.

Once, when she was not at home, I asked Sefchen to let me see that curiosity. I had not long to beg in vain, for she went into the said room, and immediately afterwards stepped forth from it with a gigantic sword, which, notwithstanding her thin arms, she swung powerfully, while she sang in a roguishly threatening manner, the words :

“Wish you to kiss the naked sword
Given to us by our Lord?”

I answered her in the same melody: “I will kiss the naked sword”—“I will kiss little red Sefchen!” and as she did not dare to resist for fear that she might hurt me with the fatal steel, she had to permit me to put my arms around her fine form and kiss her haughty mouth. Yes, notwithstanding the executioner’s sword, with which a hundred poor sinners had already been beheaded, and notwithstanding the infamy that attaches to everyone who comes in contact with the odious family, I kissed the beautiful daughter of the executioner.

I kissed her, not from any tender feeling, but out of defiance to society and all its obscure prejudices ; at this moment, however, there broke

forth in my soul the first flames of those two passions to which I remained true during the rest of my life: love for beautiful women and love for the French Revolution, that modern *furor francese*, which also seized me when I had to fight against the Mercenaries of the Middle-Ages.*

I do not wish to dwell here upon my love for Josepha. It was, I acknowledge, only a prelude to the tragedies of my later life. Thus Romeo is first in love with Rosalind before he meets his Juliet.

In love, just as in the Roman Catholic religion, there is a preliminary purgatory in which one is to become accustomed to being roasted before one enters the real, eternal hell.

Hell! May one speak of love in such a wicked manner? Well, if you wish, I will compare it to heaven. Unfortunately, in love we cannot exactly find out the point where it begins to resemble hell or heaven most, just as little as we

* Heine alludes here to his polemics against the poets of the so-called "Romantic School" of Germany, who sacrificed in their work the truth of actual life to romantic imagination, and who chose especially the Middle-Ages as a background for their poetical productions.

know whether the angels we meet in the one are not devils in masks, or whether the devils in the other are not perhaps disguised angels.

To say the truth, what a fearful disease is the love for women! Unfortunately, no inoculation helps, as we have seen.* Very intelligent and experienced physicians usually advise change of place, and believe that distance from the enchantress also breaks the enchantment. The homœopathic principle, according to which a woman cures us of a woman, is perhaps the most practical.

This much you will have seen, my dear reader, that the inoculation for love, which my mother tried to make during my childhood, had no favorable effect. It was written that I should be worse afflicted with that great disease, the small-pox of the heart, than all other mortals; and my heart shows the seamy scars in such an abundance that it looks like the gypsum-mask of Mirabeau, or like the *façade* of the Palais Mazarin after the glorious July days; or,

* Refers to a passage in the MSS. burned by Maximilian Heine.

still better perhaps, like the reputation of the greatest female tragedian.* But is there no cure for that fatal malady? Lately a psychologist made the assertion that it could be cured by employing the proper remedies, in the very beginning. This advice, however, reminds one of the old naïve prayer-book, which, among the prayers for all the misfortunes that threaten men, contains one which is several pages long, and which the slater is advised to recite at the moment when he is seized with dizziness, and in danger of falling from the roof.

It is equally absurd to counsel a love-sick man to fly from the sight of his beloved one, and to look for a cure by resting in loneliness on the bosom of nature. Alas! this green bosom will appear awfully tedious to him; and it would be much more advisable, if he has not lost all his energy, to look, not for rest, but for unrest, on some other very white bosom—for the most effectual anti-poison for women are women. True, this is exorcising Satan by Beelzebub, and often in such a case the cure is worse than the disease. But there is at least a chance; and in desperate love-

* Refers to Rachel.

sorrows, to change the inamorata is certainly the wisest thing. * * * * *

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But let us return to my dear father, to whom some kind-hearted old female soul had denounced me for my repeated visits to the woman from Goch, and my affection for Sefchen. These denunciations, however, had no other consequence than to give to my father an opportunity to demonstrate his amiable politeness ; for Sefchen soon afterwards told me that a very aristocratic-looking man, with powdered hair, accompanied by another man, had met her upon the promenade, and after his companion had whispered something in his ear, he had kindly looked at her ; and when passing her, had saluted her by taking off his hat.

From this description I recognized, in the saluting man, my dear kind father.

He did not however show the same indulgence when he was informed of some of my irreligious scoffings. People had accused me of denying God, and my father gave me, in consequence of it, a lecture, which was perhaps the longest he

ever gave, and was as follows: "My dear son! your mother lets you study philosophy at rector Schallmeyer's. That is her business. I, for my part, do not like philosophy, for it is nothing but superstition, and I am a merchant, and need my head for my business. You may be as much of a philosopher as you wish, but I beg you not to say openly what you think, for it would injure my business, if my customers should hear that I have a son who does not believe in God; the Jews, especially, would buy no more velveteens of me, and they are honest people, pay promptly, and have also a right to stick to their religion. I am your father, and consequently older than you, and therefore I have also more experience than you. For this reason you may believe me upon my word when I take the liberty to tell you that Atheism is a great sin."



NEWLY-DISCOVERED FRAGMENTS
OF
HEINRICH HEINE'S
WRITINGS



I

FRAGMENT OF A DRAFT OF
A TESTAMENT WRITTEN IN
GERMAN *

. I believe I am not mistaken in considering my cousin Carl Heine the natural protector of my widow. When in the winter of 1847 he visited me, for the purpose of coming to an understanding with me personally and without the interference of a legal adviser, he showed the greatest readiness to grant all my wishes in regard to my wife.

* Heine's last testament, written in French, bears the date November 13, 1851. The draft given in the above translation was probably written in 1854.

I requested him to give me the assurance that he would pay after my death half of my annual pension to my widow, just as his deceased father had agreed to do. My cousin Carl promised on his word of honor to do this, and gave me as a pledge of this stipulation his noble hand which I pressed to my lips. I was perfectly satisfied to see him thus reconciled ; but he surely would not have hesitated a moment in promising to grant the whole amount of the pension to my widow, in case I had expressed the slightest wish in this regard. But I did not request this of him, because I simply wished to insist upon those rights, an infringement of which would have been a barefaced injustice. That I had other rights, which were equally just and evident, but which were not as easily proved, I wisely and almost maliciously passed over in silence. Besides, I was then of the belief that a reduction of the pension would not be of great importance to my widow. The above-mentioned stipulation of my cousin Carl Heine was made on the 25th of February, 1847.

My situation at that time, just as the situation of the world, was very different from what it is

now. During the bankruptcy of the February Revolution I lost my savings, which consisted of shares in the bank of Gouin and in similar institutions. To this must be added my sickness, which prevented me from acquiring any great capital through assiduous work, while at the same time the increase of my expenses on account of my illness forced me to exhaust my last resources. Besides, as early as the year 1846, I had alienated my literary capital by ceding completely the copyright of my German works, for a trifling sum, to my Hamburg publisher. I wished, in taking this step, to avoid lawsuits which, by the scandal they would have caused, might have given offence to my uncle Salomon, who was then still living, and who, as he had promised to secure me a brilliant future by his last will, had a right to expect that I would use my talents, not for gain, but as a poet, for the purpose of making our name honored, as I had done heretofore.

The manuscripts which had remained in my possession, were unfortunately of such a nature that a change in my religious views, and a concession to persons whom I did not dare to offend by misunderstandings, obliged me to annihilate

the greater part of them—it may be that before my death I will have to destroy them completely—and thus, even this last resource, my widow will be deprived of. Her inheritance, therefore, will not be exactly brilliant, and I shall be satisfied if I leave her no debts to pay for me.

I acknowledge that, without the magnanimous kindness of my cousin Carl who has annually paid me the double amount of my pension, I should not have been able, notwithstanding all my efforts, to meet the expenses of my illness.

In view of this change of circumstances, I have decided to trouble my cousin Carl with a posthumous request, which I am so certain that he will grant to me, that I here thank him in advance for it: I beg him to pay after my death, to my widow, not only the half of my pension, but the full amount that I annually received while his father was still alive. My uncle always treated her with kindness and distinction, and this also justifies my request. It is probable that this appeal to the liberality of my cousin is superfluous, and that I anticipate what his generosity would have prompted him to do without it.*

* The reader who wishes to judge correctly regarding this

fragment of Heine's last will, should compare it with the letter which the poet wrote on the 20th of June, 1847, to his publisher, and which we have quoted in our introduction (pp. 95 and 96). But even without such a comparison, it will be easy for those, who are acquainted with Heine's life and character, to perceive that the above fragment does not contain by any means the real thoughts of the poet in regard to his cousin. His tender care for his wife prompts him to flatter Carl Heine, and although he says just the contrary, it is plain to be seen that he inwardly doubts whether the "magnanimous" cousin will grant his request. It seems that Heine's cousin, like the poet's father, was able to stand a strong dose of flattery, judging from the morsels which in the above testament are offered to him, such, for instance, as: "I pressed his noble hand to my lips," and "magnanimous kindness," etc., etc. These hyperbolical expressions, however, serve Heine for still another purpose; they are intended not only to satisfy the tastes of those to whom they are addressed, but also, by their very exaggeration, to intimate that perhaps just the opposite is meant. Thus, for example, when the poet, speaking of his father, says: "*He was of all human beings the one whom upon earth I have loved most*" ("Memoirs," p. 197), what person who is acquainted with the poet's writings will doubt his meaning?

MEMOIRS OF

II

FRAGMENT OF A MEMO- RANDUM, CONTAINING AN EXPLANATION OF HEINE'S CONNECTION WITH THE "AUGSBURGER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG "

PRELIMINARY REMARK

THE *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung* had brought out an unauthorized translation of Heine's "Bekenntnisse" (Confessions), which had been published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, under the title of "Aveux d'un Poète." Heine, when publishing this little work in the French periodical, had expressly announced that a German version of the text had been prepared by him,

and was about to appear at Hamburg. He was therefore greatly enraged when he heard of the literary theft that had been committed by a paper to which, as the reader of our introduction will remember, Heine had been a contributor for a number of years.

In a letter to Prince Pückler-Muskau, the poet writes in regard to this affair as follows: "What do you say to the incomprehensible baseness of the act that the *Allgemeine Zeitung* has committed against me, by translating from the *Revue des Deux Mondes* an article of which I had already announced my German version — by translating it, I say, from the already mutilated French into the most clumsy Bavarian, mutilating it still more, and at the same time giving to the reader the assurance that the translation is faithful, and accompanying this translation with the meanest insults, which, it is true, I have not yet read myself, but which, as the reports from Germany say, surpass in their low language and in their venom the most vulgar things that have ever been written. It is even said to contain the most infamous allusions in regard to my sickness. Under the very worst circumstances one does not break thus with a person with whom one has been on intimate terms for twenty-five years, or even more. As regards Cotta, he is a gentleman full of loyalty and honor, and he was always so kind to me that it would be wrong for me to accuse him of having had even the slightest knowledge of the affair. . . ."

The desire of publicly paying a tribute of friendship to Baron Cotta, and of explaining his connection with the *Allgemeine Zeitung*—the actual editors of which, as Heine had learned, were not to blame for the article in question—probably induced Heine to write the following memorandum, which was, no doubt, intended to be used in one of his works.

MEMORANDUM

. . . Old Baron Cotta was worthy to be the friend of Schiller and Goethe, and he participated in the cosmopolitan views of these two men, which, however, did not prevent him from being a great patriot; for he was not satisfied with an idle approval of the merits of the neighboring nations, but he unweariedly worked in the interest of his countrymen. By means of his enormous wealth, of an acquaintance with the best German authors, and especially of diplomatic relations which brought him in contact with the most celebrated statesmen in all parts of the world, he succeeded in raising the reputation of the *Allgemeine Zeitung* to the greatest height. This paper was his pride and his joy, the profit was

of little consideration to him. The *Allgemeine Zeitung*—it was he himself; and whoever loved old Cotta had also to love that paper, which was an incarnation of the old gentleman, and in which even after his death his mind continued to live.

This enchantment also influenced the author of these lines, who transferred his friendship for the old baron to the latter's favorite creation, and was one of the chief reasons why I was for such a long while a contributor to the *Allgemeine Zeitung*. Through this paper, at the same time, I remained in intellectual contact with my fatherland, and with the dear friends and persons who shared my opinions, and who also contributed to the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, and some of whom even lived in Augsburg. To a person dwelling in exile such a printed correspondence is a kind of woeful consolation, and to me it was as if I were writing home and to my family. Those friends have since died, and the paper has gradually acquired a color that I do not like, although it cannot be said that the present Baron Cotta, who owns the paper, has not remained faithful to the traditions of his father. I do not know what influences counteract his better understanding. In his direc-

tion of the paper he shows, that he has not only great pecuniary but also great intellectual means at his disposal, although from modesty he does not make a display of them. In the last letter with which he favored me, I found the touching remark: "I have not inherited the intellect of my father, but I believe I have inherited his heart." He who can write thus must indeed possess intellect.

A peculiar accident induces me to-day, when speaking of the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, to mention also how much I esteem the noble character of Herr von Cotta, who up to this moment has proved to me that he has inherited also some of the sympathy with which his deceased father honored me. The newspapers give at present circulation to the rumor that I intend to legally prosecute the *Allgemeine Zeitung* on account of having been injured by this paper, in regard to my personal character as well as to my pecuniary interests. This rumor is, of course, without the slightest foundation. This false report is based, however, upon a fact which, unfortunately, is not a mere invention; for in this very *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*, for which I have

corresponded for twenty-five years, and which with such amiable zeal has defended me against lies and calumniations—yes, in this very same paper an act of baseness was perpetrated against me that is unheard-of in the annals of literature. Under the pretext of making an article, which I had published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, accessible as quickly as possible to the German public, this article, “*Les Aveux d’un Poète*,” although it appeared at the same time in German at my publisher’s, Campe, in Hamburg, was nevertheless translated by the *Allgemeine Zeitung* from the French into the most miserable German, and in the most malicious manner; while at the same time it was accompanied by the rudest and basest additions.

As the insults only centred around those well-known themes, which have furnished subjects for years to the so-called national party, or rather to the *mauvaise queue* of the old Teutomaniacs and Gallophobes, for pouring out their venom in all possible variations, they had only little effect upon me. Besides, I knew of these insults only by report; and I know that they have foolishly overstepped all sensible bounds in their bitterness

and consequently have produced simply disgust. Only the fact that the *Allgemeine Zeitung* was found ready to accept such a publication sadly astonished me.

When I sent to Prince Pückler-Muskau my dedicatory epistle of "Lutetia," and replied to one of his letters, in which he with indignation expressed his surprise on account of the "pasquinade" of the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, I acknowledged to the Prince that the manner in which the editors had acted remained incomprehensible to me, the more so as my soul frees Dr. Kolb of any complicity whatever in this affair.

In order to procure for me authentic information from the best source, the Prince wrote a letter to Baron Cotta, at Stuttgart, in which he stigmatized, in his superior and witty manner, the insulting article and its author, and which concludes with the words: "I believe you, like myself, must have been unwittingly reminded of the fable of the sick lion, and you must have been astonished that the ass who gave to the lion the last kick, instead of having issued from some stable of Augias, had broken out of your own palace."

By his reply to this letter, dated December 28th of last year, Baron Cotta proved that, in fact, he had inherited the heart of his father; and without any reservation whatever, he avowed his disapproval of the misuse which a temporary editor had made of his short power.

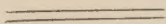
I was obliged to explain this misunderstanding between myself and the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, in order to prove how little reason there is for maintaining that animosity is the cause of some severe remarks, which I have made in my "Lutetia" against that paper. True, that deplorable affair annoyed me during the first few moments, but I quickly overcome such feelings. In the end, I laugh at myself.

A scene of a long-forgotten English comedy of Farquhar, at the time passed quickly through my mind in my humor of self-irony. The scene takes place in an establishment of a rather low kind, and an old Irish major complains that, although for a quarter of a century he had been a daily guest and an ornament of that house, some person had thrown a very queer sort of a vessel at his head. The hostess seeks to quiet him by telling him that the strumpet who had shown

so great a lack of propriety was to be sent away in disgrace ; and that he, being such a superior mind, could not be offended by so low a person. The major, however, answers grumbling that this was all true enough, but that, in consequence of the unclean affair, his wig had had a very bad odor for a week.

III

MISSIVE TO JACOB VENEDEY



INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE missive given below is addressed to a countryman of Heine, by the name of Jacob Venedey, and may serve as a good specimen of the manner in which Heine treated those who had insulted him.

Venedey, on account of his speeches at the revolutionary outbreak during the so-called "Hambach Festival," was arrested and imprisoned in Germany. He, however, succeeded in making his escape and went to Paris, where, in 1835, he

founded an ultra-radical periodical bearing the title *Der Geächtete* (The Outlaw), which was denounced by the Prussian Embassy to the French Government as dangerous to public security. In consequence of this denunciation, Venedey was banished for five years to Havre, and he remained there until 1840, although Heinrich Heine, who had made his acquaintance, made efforts, through his friend Thiers, to obtain a retraction of the decree of banishment.

After his return, Venedey often visited Heine, and was always kindly received by the poet. Nevertheless, the character of the two men was so different that real friendship between them was impossible. Their only points of contact were, that they were both hostile to the absolute monarchies, and that both lived as exiles in France ; but Heine, with his great intellectual superiority and his clear understanding, was very much amused by the ultra-radical rage of Venedey, who was a great demagogue in words, but possessed no personal courage, and would have shrunk from any active participation in the execution of republican ideas.

Heine suffered his presence rather than liked

it, and he could not refrain from occasionally making Venedey the butt of his wit.

At the time when Lola Montez and her adventures furnished daily some new subjects to the Bavarian press, Venedey, full of virtuous indignation on account of the fact that in Germany a mistress *à la Pompadour* had gained power over the King of Bavaria and influenced public affairs, wrote a pamphlet entitled "The Spanish Dancing-girl and German Liberty."

One day when Meissner asked Heinrich Heine whether he had read this pamphlet, he replied: "No, I have not read it. I read only the large works of our friend Venedey. Those of three, four, or five volumes I like best. Water, when spread over a large surface—a lake, a sea, an ocean of water—is a fine thing, but in a teaspoon it is insupportable to me."

On another occasion Heine remarked that Venedey had no other title to leadership in the Republican camp than that his father had once danced around a tree of liberty in the city of Cologne.

These and similar remarks irritated Venedey very much, for he was unable to understand a

joke, and he became furious when in Switzerland he read the poem of Heine entitled "Kobes I," which he believed the poet had written to ridicule him.

In this poem Heine jestingly advises his countrymen to elect Kobes (nickname for Jacob) of Cologne for their leader, and we quote here a few stanzas from it in Bowring's translation :—

Choose one of the people your monarch to be,
All sons of the nobles reject ye ;
Select not the lion, select not the fox,
The dullest of sheep elect ye.

Elect as your monarch Colonia's son,
The crown to dull Kobes awarding ;
The genius of dulness well-nigh is he,
His people he'll ne'er be defrauding.

A log is ever the best of kings,
As Æsop has shown in the fable ;
He cannot devour us poor frogs up,
As the stork with his long bill is able.

Be sure that Kobes no tyrant will be
No Holofernes or Nero ;
He boasts no terrible antique heart,
A soft modern heart has our hero.

Though vulgar pride might scorn such a heart,
Yet in the arms of the helot
Of work, the unfortunate threw himself,
Becoming a regular zealot.

The men of the journeymen's *Burschenschaft*
As president Kobes elected ;
He shared with them their last piece of bread,
They held him vastly respected.

They boasted that he in all his life
Had never been at college,
And out of his head composed his books
By the light of intuitive knowledge.

Yes, his consummate ignorance
Was the fruit of his own endeavor;
With foreign wisdom and training he
Had injured his intellect never.

From abstract philosophy's influence
Kept likewise his thoughts and his spirit
Entirely free — himself he remained ;
Yes, Kobes has really his merit !

The tear of the usual stereotype form
In his beautiful eye is gleaming,
And from his lips incessantly
The grossest stupidity's streaming.

He prates and he grins, and he grins and prates,
His words with long ears are provided ;
A pregnant woman who heard him speak
Gave birth to a donkey decided.

With scribbling books and knitting he's wont
His idle hours to flavor ;
The stockings that he with his own hands knit
Have met with particular favor.

To devote himself wholly to knitting he's begged
By Apollo and all the Muses ;
They're frightened whenever they see that his hand
A goose-quill laboriously uses.

Venedey, after having read the poem, had no other thought but to avenge himself on Heine ; he executed his plan in a very stupid manner, however. His first action was to return to Heine a small amount of money that he had borrowed of him twenty years before, and which fact he seemed only now to remember ; and, after having done this, he inserted in the *Cologne Gazette* a series of verses, in which he insulted the dying poet in a very rude and at the same time clumsy manner.

When Heine received the money, which he,

as he maintained, had given to Venedey as a gift of friendship, he sent it to Alexandre Dumas as a contribution to a collection, which the French author had opened for the benefit of the poor people suffering on account of the severe winter of 1855; and he accompanied this contribution with a letter written in French, which Dumas published in his *Mousquetaire* of February 14th, 1855, and of which we will give an extract in translation:—

“Paris, February, 1855.

“MY DEAR DUMAS,

“Several of the last numbers of your paper have been read aloud to me, and from these I see that, with your unwearied kindness of heart, you have opened a new collection for the benefit of the unfortunate. I hasten to send you enclosed a check for fifty francs, upon a bank in Zurich, which I received from a countryman of mine, who at present lives in Switzerland, and who says that twenty years ago he had borrowed the sum of fifty francs of me. I would like to get rid of this check as soon as possible, for it stinks. It exhales the smell of an ass, which sickens me;

the ass, of all animals, is most hateful to me ; this is an idiosyncrasy which dates from my childhood. When I heard the bray of a donkey, a horrible anxiety always overcame me, and I quickly took to my heels.

“I have never been able to overcome this aversion, which I share with many of our colleagues ; the roaring of a lion or of a tiger does not make me tremble. The hungry wolves which have occasionally, at night-time, persecuted me, did not terrify me by their howling. The mewling of a cat is somewhat more disagreeable to me, but nevertheless it does not inspire me so much with fear as it does my renowned countryman, Meyerbeer, whose features are overspread with pallor as soon as he sees a cat. A pupil of Pythagoras who believes in the transmigration of souls, might make the assertion that the great *maestro*, during his former existence, was only a poor little mouse, and that even in his present body he has kept the timid heart of a mouse that is afraid of the smallest kitten. The grunting of hogs does not exactly give me great enjoyment, and when a hog is butchered, I prefer to the tunes which are heard on that

occasion the music of the above-mentioned great *maestro* Giacomo Meyerbeer.

“Only through long habit I have become accustomed to the barking of dogs of all kinds, from a mastiff down to the smallest ‘Spitz,’ and at present I have succeeded in laughing at the united efforts of a whole pack of hounds, which try to prevent me from sleeping. The animal, however, which, as above said, terrifies me, is the ass; and insupportable to me is the bray of an ass that has been enraged, by the rubbing of its posterior with a handful of pepper, as our mischievous boys occasionally do. The sounds then uttered by the enraged beast, which would like to bite but can only cry, give me a horror, and I do not laugh like my friends on account of that frightful and never-ending ‘Ee-ah!’ that comical sobbing, which is just as fearful as repugnant—those unheard-of, almost sublimely stupid sounds, which a raging ass utters in his powerless wrath. The horrible and at the same time ridiculous monster is so exasperated, that it no longer spares anything, neither the ears of men nor of gods; and it rends them without pity because it is unable to rend any-

thing else. True, the first wrong has been done by the people, who have applied pepper to that part of the beast which we have mentioned; but the vexed ass is nevertheless an ugly, spiteful animal, and all the arrogance, envy, impudence, base rage, malice and spite, that were hidden in his intestines heretofore, become apparent in his cry of despair. The stupid animal was formerly so meek; he permitted himself to be cudgeled with such touching modesty; he possessed that appearance of commonplace seriousness which we always believe to be allied to a certain honesty; he was too stupid, too silly, too simple, not to have been taken for honest, and he always seemed to say: 'I am a simpleton, therefore I am honest!' and in fact it happened that people spoke of him as the honest . . .

"But stop! dear Dumas, I would almost have committed the blunder of mentioning the name of the so-called honest ass; I shall take good care not to do this. I scarcely dare to call him 'Jack,' although, as the proverb says, 'there is more than one donkey by the name of Jack;' for I should always run the risk that in some corner of my native country some obscure Jack improve the

opportunity of bringing himself before the public by pretending that *he* was meant. I know those fellows, who greedily cling to the most general remark which emanates from a pen of some reputation, in order to utilize it for the benefit of their own stupid vanity, and who wish for nothing better than to be able to raise a cry in the papers, and to write to the editor: 'Dear Sir, the ass of which Heinrich Heine speaks in his letter, is myself! Ee-ah! Ee-ah! Ee-ah! Ee-ah!'

"As I do not wish to give any chance of a puff to that ass who would absolutely like to give publicity to his donkeyism, I leave this subject."

The following Missive, which has not been published heretofore, and which is an answer to Venedey's verses in the *Cologne Gazette* was probably written at about the same time as the above letter.

MISSIVE

When Balaam, the son of Beor, saw that his ass opened his mouth and talked, he surely was

not so astonished as I, when I saw that my good Venedey had so entirely forgotten himself as to suddenly turn poet and make verses. And what verses !

Fearful it is to rouse a lion,*
And dangerous is the tiger's tooth,
Most fearful though it is to spy an
Ass enraged, and 'tis forsooth,

especially horrible when he cries : " I also am a poet," and utters his versified " Ee-ah."

No, my dear fellow, nobody can stand that kind of poetry. Even a less civilized stomach would become sea-sick from it ; even a flat-nosed Russian would not be able to stand the smell of these slops in rhymes, and your poems ought to be sent to Menzikoff at Sebastopol—he surely would at once throw up all. Your ruminated prose is ambrosia in comparison with this four-footed poetry.

Every verse an ass ! Goethe would turn around in his tomb if he could hear these sounds.

* Parody of a stanza in Schiller's "Lied von der Glocke."

Jacob Grimm would be struck by apoplexy if he could see how your verses defile our beautiful mother-tongue. The poor German Muse, blushing and wringing her hands, exclaims: "O, Jacob Venedey, you have injured me, indeed you have injured me very much, for you have soiled my pure white tunic with your water of Cologne, which is not by any means as odorous as that of your countryman, Maria Farina!"

"Alas, dearest Venedey, you are a worse sinner than I, who in boyish waggishness only wetted, a little bit, the garments of old women and, I acknowledge it, also your new mantle; while you have sullied my high Goddess, the German Muse, our beautiful German language, the soul of our country. And our language is the best we Germans possess; it is our fatherland itself, and to that have you given a bad smell. Oh, what have you done, you who pretend to be a patriot?"

Pardon me, I feel overcome by patriotism. I feel how, setting aside all French politeness, I might exclaim in thoroughly German rudeness: Dirty menial, Nature has destined you to clean closets and not to be a German poet! Do not touch the German Muse with your filthy dactyls,

do not soil her white garment which is a present from me!

Pardon my rudeness of expression. I also am a German!

LETTER TO MR. CALMANN-LEVY

MY DEAR MR. LEVY—

On opening this morning the envelope containing the proof-sheet which your young man brought me the day before yesterday, I see, to my great displeasure, that sheet 17 (as also the last part of sheet 16), which contained precisely the impression of that part of the manuscript which is in the said envelope, was not sent to me. Now, this manuscript is so bad and so confusedly written, that a careful revision of the proof by myself is of the utmost importance. The piece itself, furthermore, touches a very scaly subject; hence a mistake in the printing might play me a terrible trick in my own country. Therefore, I am anxious

to see and to correct that 17th sheet, as soon as possible, and I beg you to tell the printer to have it, as well as the last part of sheet 16, sent to me at once.

Are the sheets, which you brought me the other day, already wholly printed off? I had the idea of not having you send me the proofs of the sheets, in which there are no important alterations to make, leaving entirely to you the work of carefully revising them before going to press. It will, however, do no harm to send them to me, all the same, before they are printed off, for, at a moment, when my eyes permit of it, I may like to see if there is nothing out of the way in them. For instance, if page 285 is not yet struck off, I should be glad to insert *là* before the same word *la* in the 9th line. Unfortunately, the whole sentence ought to be re-written: And it is this page only that I have glanced at. This is the reason why, in future, I wish to have sent me all the sheets before they are printed.

A piece of good news, that I forgot to communicate to you the other day: An English translation of the "Reisebilder," which has appeared in New York, has met with an enormous success,

according to a correspondence in the *Augsburger Zeitung* (which does not love me enough to invent successes for me).

Please send me :

- 1 copy of "De l'Allemagne,"
- 2 do. of "Lutèce," and
- 2 do. of "Poésies et Légendes."

I am, yours obediently,

HENRI HEINE.

Wednesday, Oct. 4, 1855.

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